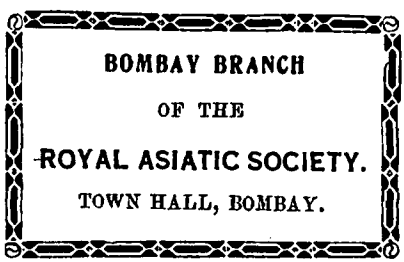

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LIFE

OF

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

1552—1618.

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BY

JAMES AUGUSTUS ST. JOHN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO

SPENSER ST. JOHN, ESQ.,

HER MAJESTY'S CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES TO THE REPUBLIC OF HAYTI,

THIS NEW 'LIFE OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH'

IS DEDICATED,

BY HIS AFFECTIONATE FATHER,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

It may possibly be expected that I should state my reasons for undertaking a new biography of Sir Walter Raleigh, of whom more lives have perhaps been written than of any other Englishman. Besides that it seems needful for nations to review from time to time the achievements and characters of their great men, that they may be made to appear in the light in which they ought to be regarded in a civilized age, many other motives concur in the case of Raleigh for entering now into a critical examination of his career. It is no reproach to former biographers to maintain that they could by no possibility have written a complete life of Raleigh, because the materials for such a work were wanting. This will be evident to all who compare the following indication of what is new in the present volume with former biographies :—

1. I have proved by new documents that Raleigh made a voyage to the West Indies sixteen years before he is supposed to have visited that part of the world.

2. I have accounted in an entirely new chapter for a period of Raleigh's life which has been hitherto contemplated as a blank, and shown that instead of living in obscurity before his services in Ireland, he passed his time in the company of the foremost men in England.

3. The date is here fixed of his departure from London and arrival at Cork, which is found to have been nearly half a year earlier than, according to previous narratives, he appears in the Irish wars.

4. The conduct of Lord Grey of Wilton, under whose orders Raleigh perpetrated the massacre of del Oro, is demonstrated to have been the reverse of that which history has hitherto maintained.

5. More remarkable still, and more contrary to the prevalent opinion, is the part played by Elizabeth in relation to that massacre.

6. While fixing the date of Raleigh's return from Ireland, I have shown that the old tradition, derived from Naunton and others, respecting his introduction at Court, is a fiction.

7. Numerous incidents of his court life, and bearing on his feud with Essex, are given from authentic sources.

8. Important additions have been made to the relation of his services against the Armada, partly from English, partly from foreign manuscripts.

9. Some new facts are brought forward connected

with the expedition to Portugal, and the visit to Spenser in Ireland.

10. To the story of his passion for Elizabeth Throgmorton, afterwards Lady Raleigh, some curious particulars have been added, as well as to the record of his first imprisonment in the Tower, his release, and his great prize, the Madre de Dios.

11. After the Guianian expedition, concerning which scarcely anything new has been brought forward, we come to the taking of Cadiz, towards giving a fair description of which I have been aided by manuscripts found at Madrid.

12. Of the additions made to the account of what Raleigh did and suffered under Elizabeth, perhaps the most curious, and certainly the most important, are those which illustrate his contest with Essex.

13. From Venetian, French, and Spanish manuscripts much information has been obtained concerning that part of Raleigh's career which extends from the death of Elizabeth to his trial at Winchester, and his third imprisonment in the Tower.

14. Fresh disclosures are made respecting his prison life, his literary and scientific labours, with the sufferings and persecutions he endured.

15. His connexion with Prince Henry, with the Duke of Savoy, with the French princes in arms against Louis XIII.; his so-called piratical project against

Genoa; his secret negociations with the French court; his last voyage to Guiana; his proceedings at the Canaries; the intrigues of Philip and Gondomar against him; the vindictiveness and pusillanimity of James; the desertion and treachery of several among his followers; the secret debates in the Supreme Council of Madrid on the crimes he was accused of having perpetrated; the manœuvres for warding off hostilities between Great Britain, Spain, and France, which were on the verge of breaking out on his account; the sanguinary eagerness with which his life was sought by the Spanish king and his agents; the oversights committed by Raleigh himself, during his last imprisonment; the real circumstances attending his death: on all these points, with many others, the manuscripts existing at Simancas throw a new light, and enable us to comprehend several statements which were previously obscure.

It will probably be admitted, therefore, that the reasons above enumerated are more than sufficient to justify a new life of Sir Walter Raleigh. In this belief I have devoted to the subject the labour of seven years; have caused to be examined the manuscript collections of this country, and, through the assistance of a distinguished lady and Mr. Rawdon Brown, have obtained many valuable documents from Paris and Venice. Also I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of acknowledging

my obligations to Mr. Hepworth Dixon, who, while engaged on his 'Life of Lord Bacon,' made a collection of documents, bearing on Sir Walter Raleigh's career, which he kindly placed at my disposal. I have likewise received aid from Mr. Duffus Hardy, Mr. Bruce, Mr. Hans Hamilton, and Mr. Sainsbury of the State Paper Office. I must likewise express how much I owe to the indefatigable exertions of Mr. Agar Hansard, who for many years devoted himself to the deciphering and transcribing of manuscripts at the Record Office and at the British Museum. During a visit to Spain, performed in company with my son, Spenser St. John, her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires to the Republic of Hayti, I examined the manuscripts preserved in the various repositories of Madrid, and in the old castle of the Admirals of Castile, at Simancas. It will consequently, I trust, be allowed that I have spared neither pains nor expense in the endeavour to do justice to the memory of Raleigh, whose conduct, motives, and misfortunes I have sought to describe and explain with truth and impartiality.

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LIFE OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH, STUDIES, AND MARTIAL DISCIPLINE.

Sir Walter Raleigh was born in the year 1552, the year in which the Duke of Somerset was executed, while Mary at St. Edmondsbury sat in doubt and gloom, watching the progress of her young brother's disease, which, if it terminated fatally as she probably hoped, would leave her mistress of England. Elizabeth and Leicester were then nineteen years of age;* Mary Queen of Scots was eleven, while many of the men with whom Raleigh was afterwards associated were yet to be born—Sir Philip Sidney two, Bacon nine years later. Shakespeare twelve, James Stuart fourteen, and Essex fifteen. The mention of these names suggests a world of adventure, thought, speculation, and crime.

* Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth,' and Collins, 'Sidney State Papers,' i. 44, suggest that Elizabeth and Leicester were born on the same day and hour.

Raleigh rose when Europe was full of action, and played his part in it, sometimes nobly, sometimes otherwise, but always with fierce daring and recklessness. In active bravery he had no superior, either then or at any other time. He has been compared with many men, but resembled none; the mixture of his character was *sui generis;* he distinguished himself for many virtues, and many vices, now displaying magnanimity and generosity, now pride, vindictiveness, and cruelty.

Yet such as he was, the eyes of all England were turned on him while he lived, admiringly always, pityingly sometimes, lovingly never; there having been something in his temper and disposition, which, however great and glorious his actions might be, rendered him essentially unpopular. It might be his pride, it might be the remoteness of his views and opinions from those of the vulgar—for Raleigh had the reputation of espousing strange doctrines, and of being exceedingly sparing in his beliefs—it might be his hostility to Essex, to de Vere, to the Scotchmen who came in with James, to James himself, and to all upholders and abettors of the Spanish monarchy.

Raleigh in sentiments and feelings resembled his great mistress, though he differed from her totally in manners, since, while he scarcely possessed a friend, she charmed the hearts of all around her, and was the idol of her people. His enemies were numerous and virulent

almost beyond example; they denounced him as a sophist, as a wizard, as a necromancer, as an atheist, and in our own times there have not been wanting those who have ventured to repeat the calumny.

While he lay captive in the Bloody Tower, everything vile and mean considered itself privileged to trample on his great name; a curtain was purposely drawn over his prison life; he was respited from the block to writhe awhile in darkness, and then to be brought forth to light, to misfortune, and the block again. His persecutors meanwhile, bedizened with titles and oppressed with opulence, played out their parts, and fell away, some to oblivion, others to infamy. Raleigh went forth to the new world in search of gold, missed it, and was executed for his failure. According to some he deserved his fate, though not on the ground on which it came to him. I shall examine the whole tissue of circumstances leading from Hayes Farm to Palace Yard, after which the reader will, I trust, be placed in a position to decide whether or not we can say of Raleigh as Suetonius does of Cæsar, "Jure Cæsus est."

Before a man vindicates his right to fame, people usually take but slight notice of him, or the scenes of his early life. Despite therefore of his handsome person and brilliant qualities, Raleigh excited in his youth little attention from such as might have transmitted an account of him to posterity.

Of Hayes,* the farmhouse in which he was born, no description of an old date has been preserved. It stands at the distance of about a mile from Budleigh, on a level piece of ground, overshadowed by ancient trees, and surrounded by copses and young plantations. While grappling with the hard realities of life in his perilous ascent from those lowly groves and meadows to the pinnacles of power and glory, Raleigh never bestowed a line on his birthplace, though he loved the spot, and, surrounded by all the splendours of Elizabeth's court, sought to purchase it from its then possessor, in the vain hope that the head which never knew repose might there at last find rest, when satiated with the honours and intoxicating vanities of the world.

A wayfarer from London who, like most Londoners, appreciates whatever is touching and beautiful in the country, pauses awhile in his pilgrimage to the Land's End to visit the spot where Raleigh was born. His description is interesting. "Turning off," he says, "by a lane to the left, we reach the church (of Budleigh); another mile brings you to Hayes Barton, Raleigh's birthplace. It is a solitary farmhouse, once the manor-house, built in the picturesque style of four hundred years ago, with gabled wings and portico, thatched roof and mullioned windows, and a heavy oaken door, thickly studded with iron nails, standing at the end of a garden,

* Prince, 'Worthies of Devon,' p. 666.

partly concealed by a few old trees that rise from among the herbs and flowers . . . . The whole scene shut in by low swelling hills and lines of tall hedges, is eminently rural." *

Though Raleigh does not mention by name the place of his birth, it may be inferred from more than one of his poems that he often, with something like regret, contrasted with its quiet delights the dazzling but delusive splendours of a court-life. While writing the following passage, his memory, we can scarcely doubt, was filled with images of the swift Otter, of the many nameless runnels that feed it, and the rich scenery through which they flow.

Fly from our country pastimes, fly,
Sad troop of human misery:
Come serene looks,
Clear as the crystal brooks,
Or the pure azured heaven that smiles to see
The rich attendance of our poverty.
Peace and a secure mind,
Which all men seek, we only find.

Abused mortals! did you know
Where joy, heart's-ease, and comforts grow,
You'd scorn proud towers,
And seek them in these bowers,
Where winds sometimes our woods perhaps may shake,
But blustering care could never tempest make;
Nor murmurs e'er come nigh us,
Saving of fountains that glide by us.

* Walter White, 'A Londoner's Walk to the Land's End,' pp. 97-001.

Our curiosity, stimulated by his after-life, would gladly be led back to the incidents of his childhood, but his contemporaries had little taste for such topics, and preserve one and all a provoking silence. My own researches have led to the discovery of but one fact, and that, after all, belongs rather to the scanty records of his father's life than to his. While the little Walter, then but two years old, was toddling about among the flowers and beehives, under the shadow of old trees in front of the Barton, the movements of a patriotic rebellion were agitating the counties of Devon and Cornwall. His kinsman, Sir Peter Carew, a person of large following in those parts, was conspiring with Sir Thomas Wyatt to organize resistance against the Spanish Philip, who, they doubted not, would attempt the introduction of despotism into England.

The views of the conspirators differed, and led to separate courses of action, Wyatt determining to defer his rising till Philip's arrival, while Carew counselled an immediate appeal to arms. Returning, therefore, to his own county, Sir Peter, with Sir Gawain Carew and others, began the insurrection; but being disappointed in the number of his adherents, Sir Peter soon perceived that the game was up, and that he must fly the country. To accomplish this design he applied to Raleigh's father, who possessing a bark,* conveyed his brave relative to

* Sir Thomas Denys to the Council, January 28th. Sir John St. Leger to the Council, January 29th, 1554. MSS. State Paper Office.

Weymouth, whence he passed over into Flanders. Ultimately, however, he fell at Brussels into the hands of Philip, through whose unusual lenity he was suffered to return to England, where he rose to distinction under Elizabeth. Raleigh's childhood and boyhood were passed in that sweet obscurity which is the best nurse of original thought. Around him on all sides lay strong incentives to speculation and action; Dartmoor in the north with its Phœnician traditions, to the south the ocean, afterwards to become the field of his greatest triumphs and disasters.

No one who has seen Devonshire can forget its beauty, its green lanes, its clear sparkling streams, gurgling between rare plants towards the sea; its light feathery woods, its fairy hollows and green knolls, a combination which makes it the paradise of England. Here it was that Raleigh strayed, book in hand, imbibing learning with that irrepressible eagerness which led him throughout life to deny himself the amount of sleep which a majority of mankind deem necessary; yet looking through and beyond learning to the fierce delight of the battle-field, the thunder of the deck, where life, and all that life holds dear, are staked against ambition. The Raleighs, with nearly all their belongings, were Protestants, though not Puritans, and it is fair to conjecture that Walter only acted in the spirit of his family, when a few years later he tinged

his maiden sword with Catholic blood on the battle-fields of France.

In 1566 Raleigh, then in his fourteenth year, repaired to Oriel College, Oxford,* where he seems to have commenced that friendship with Sir Philip Sidney to which nothing could put a period but death. They were both studious, both proud, both eager for fame; but Sidney with some outbreaks of fierceness,† had the gentler nature and softer manners, while Raleigh had the more iron frame, fiery temperament, and unattractive habits of thought. Still the traditions of the University long continued to represent him as the ornament of its youthful students, and spoke of his proficiency in the most difficult and the most popular branches of knowledge, philosophy and eloquence.‡

One anecdote only is related of his college life: when short of money, he borrowed, we are told, an academic gown from a fellow-student, and on leaving the university forgot to return or pay for it. Our authority for this story is a suspicious one, being no other than that credulous and reckless gossip, John Aubrey,§ who has chronicled all the scandal of half a dozen generations. Yet the story may be true, for he assures us it was

* Prince, 'Worthies of Devon,' p. 667.

† See his letter to Molineux, 'Sidney State Papers,' i., 256.

‡ Wood, 'Athenæ Oxonienses,' i., 226.

§ Letters from the Bodleian, ii, 517.

told him by the lender of the gown, a Worcestershire squire.

Much has been written against the academical studies of those times, which though imperfect were yet compatible with great intellectual development. Wolsey, More, Burleigh, Sidney, Raleigh, and Bacon himself, sprang from the womb of the decried system. Shakespeare, though its teaching came to him through irregular channels, had his imagination fed by its dews, and his understanding enlightened by its philosophy. Whatever improvements, therefore, may have been made in later times, it is scarcely matter of doubt, that the results have not in all things equalled those which crowned the old method of study.

After remaining at the University three years, Raleigh quitted it without a degree, and in the beginning of 1569, repaired to France. The two leading forms of Christianity were then drenching the French soil with blood,* one to repress, the other to establish liberty of conscience, and the young English soldier immediately took up his position under the standard of freedom. Four women were then directing or misdirecting the energies of Europe. Catherine de Medici,† widow of

* Lodge, 'Illustrations of British History,' i. 437.

† This princess, like our Catherine of Aragon, was a great eater, though she endeavoured by much walking to mitigate the effect of her gourmandise. What spiritualism is to the superstitious women of the present day, astrology was to Catherine and her contempo-

Henri II., forty-nine years of age, was organizing and stimulating that bigotry which ripened three years later into the most detestable crime on record. Elizabeth, in her thirty-sixth year, standing proudly at the head of the Protestant world, secretly or openly devoted the powers of her vigorous mind, and the resources of her kingdom, to deliver mankind from the yoke of Rome. In the same cause likewise laboured Jeanne d'Albret, widow of Antoine de Bourbon, and mother to Henri of Navarre, who laid aside the pursuits proper to her sex, in order to secure to her young son an independent crown, and a religion from which he afterwards, through secular motives, apostatized. Jeanne was now leading a man's life in the camp of the Huguenots, inflaming their zeal, and bringing them such succour as her woman's eloquence or policy could insure. Mary Stuart,* who through her crimes and follies had come to be a prisoner in England, exerted nevertheless a powerful influence over the counsels of Christendom, whose statesmen for years converted her into a pretext for disturbing the peace of this country, and directing the assassin's knife against Elizabeth's breast.

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raries. Raumer, 'History of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,' i., 265, 268.

* Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth in Kennett,' ii., 370; Froude, 'Reign of Elizabeth.'

Raleigh found among his comrades in France many gallant Scotchmen, who, hating with no common hatred the superstition of the Vatican, flocked to the scene of the civil wars, where they defended with indomitable fortitude the posts confided to them by the Huguenot generals.

On the other hand, the Catholic cause attracted numerous volunteers from Spain, and other countries, so that the struggle going on might be fairly considered a conflict of principles as opposite in their nature as evil and good.

On the thirteenth of March, 1569, Raleigh, in the costume of a Huguenot trooper, fought his first battle against the enemies of his country's faith, and beheld some of the worst excesses to which men are impelled by wars of religion. Louis de Bourbon, Prince of Condé, who led the charge of the Huguenot cavalry, having had his horse killed under him, was taken prisoner with his arm in a sling, from a previous bruise, and one of his legs broken. In that condition it might have been expected that the hostile general would have received him with a soldier's sympathy, instead of which he encouraged and rejoiced at his assassination, and breathed forth a pious vow to erect a chapel on the spot where his kinsman was murdered. He then caused his dead body to be mounted on an emaciated she ass, and paraded

through the army for the entertainment of the Catholic troops.*

After witnessing this display of chivalry by the Duc d'Anjou, one of Elizabeth's unsuccessful suitors, Raleigh retired with the defeated army, which for six months was unable again to take the field. On the third of the October following, near the village of Moncontour,† the Huguenots and Catholics once more stood face to face in the field, Coligni,‡ commanding in chief, and Prince Louis de Nassau occupying the post which was held at Jarnac by Louis de Bourbon. The present Emperor of the French, who has studied and described the movements of the Protestants and Catholics in that war, attributes the success of the latter to the superiority of their artillery. Much may be said in support of his opinion; but at Moncontour other causes contributed to produce the result. The Huguenot soldiers were so ill-paid that for an hour and a half on the very morning of that battle there was a mutiny in their camp,§ the men refusing to take the field until some portion of the arrears due to them should be discharged, and their officers urging them by all the motives which men usual hold sacred to march against

* Sismondi. 'Hist. des Franc,' xxiii., 196; De Thou, iii., 237.

† Napoleon III. Œuvres, iv., 286.

‡ D'Andelot, brother of Coligni, was poisoned by an Italian priest, 'Cabala,' p. 152; De la Noue in 'Petitot,' xxxiv., 253.

§ De la Noue, xxxiv., 272.

the enemy. To an army so demoralized it is no way surprising that defeat came. The rout, in fact, was so complete and disastrous, that, but for the skill and valour of Louis de Nassau, defeat would have been converted into a general slaughter. At the head of a thousand horse, the German prince broke through the enemy's lines, and by a masterly retreat saved from destruction full one-half of the Huguenot army.*

Two days after the catastrophe of Moncontour, Sir Henry Champernoun, with a hundred gentlemen volunteers, arrived from England, and received from the widowed Queen of Navarre, † a distinguished welcome in the Protestant camp. It has been said that of those hundred gentlemen Raleigh was one, but erroneously, since he had already been engaged in two battles before the arrival of his kinsman.

From the date of this battle we lose sight of Raleigh for six years, save that for a single moment he appears in the passes of Languedoc, during one of those frays which characterized the French civil wars, that consisted less in actual battles than in a wasting series of skirmishes that decided nothing. While crossing the mountains, Raleigh and his comrades came suddenly upon the hiding-place of a body of Catholics, who

* Raleigh, 'History of the World,' vi., 211. Nassau was reported in England to have been slain, but through Rochelle the error was soon corrected, 'Cabala,' p. 159.

† De Thou, iii., 292.

with their provisions, plate and jewels, had taken refuge in a cavern, the entrance to which lay at the bottom of a deep glen. The followers of Coligni and Louis de Nassau were not exempt from the love of fun as well as of mischief; they amused themselves, therefore, by smoking the Catholics out of their retreat with faggots of brushwood and bundles of straw, which they kindled at the cave's mouth. As the smoke thickened the prisoners became more and more restless, till at length, unable to breathe any longer the fiery atmosphere, they rushed out in despair, and purchased the mercy of the Huguenots by surrendering to them their property.*

With the culminating horrors† of the struggle, we need not in this narrative busy ourselves, since although Raleigh with his fellow-Protestants must certainly have beheld, from no great distance, the massacres organized by Charles IX. and his mother which reddened nearly the whole face of France,‡ the place of his concealment is unknown; some have conjectured that with Sir Philip Sidney, young Lord Wharton, and others, he found a

* Raleigh, 'History of the World,' v., 355.

† To intimate that heaven approved of the massacre, the Orthodox fabricated a miracle, forcing white thorn to blossom out of season by irrigating it with warm water. De Thou, iii., 673.

‡ Massacres like that of Paris were perpetrated at Orleans, Rouen, Meaux, Macon, Lyons, Romans, Valence, Toulouse, and the other principal cities of France. Achille de Gaman in 'Petitot,' xxxiv., 314.

refuge during the bloody twenty-fourth of August at the house of Walsingham, in Paris; but I am inclined to believe he was at the time in the south, where the Huguenots were generally in sufficient force to hold their ground against the myrmidons of Pope and King.*

Few in those days were untainted by the disease of superstition. Three months after the massacre, astronomers, no less than the unscientific multitude, were startled by the sudden appearance of a bright star,† which on the evening of November the eleventh, flashed upon the eye with the swiftness of a meteor, equalling Sirius in lustre, and augmenting in splendour as it advanced menacingly through space, till its brilliance exceeded that of Jupiter at its brightest, and was visible at noonday. To interpret this phenomenon surpassed the science of the age. Heaven, it was believed, had sent the celestial messenger as the indicator and precursor of its vengeance; and when Charles IX. descended to his grave in blood,‡ the meaning of the portent was supposed to be understood. During sixteen months the new star glared nightly in the sky; but after

* Sir Dudley Digges, 'Complete Ambassador,' p. 294.

† Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth,' ii., 446.

‡ Beside the massacre of August 24th, no act of cruelty can appear startling, yet it may deserve mention that Charles, with the whole royal family, went forth to witness by torchlight the hanging of two noble gentlemen, Briquemont and Cavannes.

delivering its message, retired gradually into the fathomless solitudes of the universe, and has never since been seen.* Even now, the laws which regulate the movements of periodical stars are far from being understood, though their periodicity has been ascertained, and their number discovered to be considerable.

* Sir John Herschel, 'Astronomy,' § 827.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST CONFLICT ON THE OCEAN.

THE youth of seventeen had now ripened into the man of twenty-three, who, having served his apprenticeship to war, left the blood-stained fields of France, and returned in company, as I conjecture, with George Gascoigne to London. For reasons no longer susceptible of explanation, Raleigh took chambers in the Middle Temple, or there became the guest of some friend, since he addressed from thence a complimentary poem to Gascoigne, which with several similar pieces was prefixed to his celebrated "Steel-Glass."

Our literature as yet was uncouth, owing its existence chiefly to imitation, and exhibiting itself in fantastic forms, too generally coarse ones. Still several noblemen, from Sackville to de Vere,* sought from time to time some taste of that fame which poetry confers. Sidney, Spenser, and Raleigh let loose their fancies into the

* Puttenham, 'Art of English Poesy,' p. 49.

language, and by sonnets, eclogues, and impassioned love ditties, paved the way for the 'Fairy Queen,' and 'Romeo and Juliet.'

The rude forms exhibited by literature were the outward expression of the rude forms of society. There was little real refinement in court or town, less refinement in speculation than in conduct, still less in manners than in either. Flattery, an appendage of barbarism, to the extent of its influence, begets twisted and distorted modes of speech, revealing the throes and pangs with which the soul gives birth to a lie. Elizabeth lives in all the literature of the time, and the entrance of her image into an author's mind appears to have been the signal for unnatural straining. No one was satisfied to describe her as she was; and the hyperbolical language in which the charms of this free-living vestal were delineated became the pattern of the style in which all other women were described by their poetical lovers.

Raleigh yields less to this infatuation than most of his contemporaries, and accordingly may still be read with truer pleasure. Sidney is more fanciful, but considerably less impassioned. Spenser, who in many phases of his intellectual development resembles Shelley, is exquisite in his pictures of external things, playing with poetical pantheism; that is, finding sparks of divinity everywhere, and inviting them freely to flash their divine

splendour into his verse. Yet he seldom comes near that well-spring of passion which contemporaries discovered underlying Raleigh's verse. The fascination of literature was, however, less powerful for Raleigh than the love of war. To check the progress of Don Juan of Austria in the Low Countries, Sir John Norris, with a small army of English and Scots, crossed the sea, and on Lammas Day, 1578, inflicted so severe a defeat on the Spanish general, that he is believed to have died from vexation in less than two months.* Of the victorious army Raleigh formed one, but beyond this fact nothing is known.

Events, however, were now preparing which were to bear the young aspirant of Hayes Farm to those fields of action on which he was afterwards to earn pre-eminent distinction.

Two documents, bearing exactly the same date, open up before us two vistas, which, after running parallel for a time, approximate and blend into one upon the horizon of Raleigh's fortunes. It is not at first easy to perceive how a letter written by a Jesuit at Madrid to another Jesuit at Rome should connect itself with Raleigh's story; yet so it was, for the letter discloses the existence of a project which threatened the independ-

* His death took place October 1st, 1578, Birch, 'Memoirs of Elizabeth,' ii. 15. In spite of their services, the English were so ill paid by the States, that several regiments mutinied, while three hundred men went over in a body to the enemy. Id., p. 25.

ence of England, and aimed at the extinction of her faith.

The other document originated in the same spirit, but as its birthplace was different, so likewise was its aim, one being intended to thwart the policy of Elizabeth, and put a period to her career, the other to do the same office for Philip II.

Sir Humphrey Gilbert,* Raleigh's half-brother, thirteen years older than himself, had long turned his thoughts to sea voyages, especially in the direction of America. While in London, he and Raleigh were doubtless much together, and the subjects upon which their conversations chiefly turned may safely be assumed to have been the best means of breaking the power of Spain, and founding for England a colonial empire. Both were readers, not to kill that time which dies too soon of itself, but to qualify themselves to do great things, and leave their names written, whether in tears or blood, in the history of the world. To learn how effectually to wound Spain, and contract the circle of her dominion, the brothers assiduously studied her language and geographical literature, and inflamed their minds with visions of spoil and conquest, to be realised in the New World.

Gilbert was no slight proficient in the art of writing,

* On this distinguished navigator, see Hooker, Supp. to 'Irish Chronicle.' Holingshed, vi., 367.

and on the matters with which he dealt could write vigorously; yet he never acquired that ease, dash, and voluble eloquence which distinguished Raleigh's productions from youth to age. Considering the literary character of the performance of which I have to speak, I feel persuaded it should be attributed to the younger of the half-brothers, a belief in which I am strengthened by one circumstance in the document itself. The signature is that of Gilbert, but apparently by the same pen the name has been attempted to be obliterated, though it is still legible. My interpretation of this fact is, that Gilbert, after the 'Discourse' had served its purpose, took the first step towards restoring the credit of it to its real author.

Be this as it may, the 'Discourse' is one of the most remarkable papers in the Record Office. Of morality, either public or private, it has not a particle. Assuming that the leading object of the British Government should be to destroy its enemies, whether open or disguised, it boldly points out what the writer considers the best means of obtaining the end in view. To found colonies, and enable British power to strike root in America, being the aim proposed, a plan is laid down, feasible though complicated, by which the design is to be converted from theory into practice. The fact must not be lost sight of, that England was then ostensibly at peace with France and Spain, though

all the term implied in the vocabulary of that age, was a cessation of hostilities. Elizabeth and her ministers knew that the most Catholic and most Christian kings panted for nothing so eagerly as for the conquest or overthrow of England; to bring about which there was no amount of guilt they would not cheerfully incur; so much must be borne in mind, to soften the censure which the audacious ethics of the youthful disciple of Machiavelli may provoke.

The 'Discourse,' in the most debonnair manner, takes it for granted that our Government would entertain no scruple to take a leaf out of the book of the Jesuit, provided it could be enabled to shield itself from material ill-consequences. Raleigh, as will presently be shown, was already familiar with most of Elizabeth's leading courtiers, such as Lord Charles Howard of Effingham, Lord Compton, Lord Windsor, Lord Henry Howard, young Cecil, son of the minister, Francis Southwell, with many others; and if any of these men were made privy to his scheme of plunder and conquest, they would certainly have regarded it rather with approbation than otherwise. Without much preface, the writer enters upon his project, which is, for her majesty to fit out a fleet, ostensibly for discovery alone. It is to consist of a few ships, and those manned, armed, and victualled, conformably to its object; but, at a given latitude on the ocean, this harmless squadron is to fall

in with a more formidable armament, equipped, and sent out secretly, with a force of five or six thousand men on board. After junction, the united fleet is to proceed on its errand, bold and reckless, it must be confessed, and one which even the loose practice of that age could scarcely have considered defensible.

To supply the want created by their religion, which, when red-blooded animals may not be eaten, permits its votaries to kill and eat white-blooded animals, the Spaniards, French, and Portuguese employed a large portion of their shipping in the fisheries of Newfoundland. On reaching the banks, it was customary for the crews to take to their boats, or go on shore to cure their fish, leaving a few hands on board, rather as sentinels than as defenders. Knowing this, Raleigh's plan was to make a sudden dash at these unprotected vessels, take possession of them with their ladings, return to Europe, and dispose of the whole in the ports of Holland and Zealand. If found advisable, some portion of the booty might be vended at out-of-the-way harbours on the English coast, where her majesty's vice-admirals might be instructed to connive at its introduction into England.

With the funds thus obtained, Raleigh suggested that Gilbert and he might be empowered to fit out a larger fleet, with which he persuaded himself it would be practicable to conquer the Spanish possessions in

America, then grouped together, in popular language, under the name of West Indies. "If your Highness will permit me, with my associates," he says, "either openly or covertly to perform the said enterprise; then with the gains thereof there may easily be such a competent company transported to the West Indies as may be able, not only to dispossess the Spaniards thereof, but also to possess your Majesty and realm therewith." We then catch a glimpse of those dreams of El Dorado with which Raleigh's imagination may be said to have gilded his whole life—those mines of gold and silver which adventurers and explorers expected to find in America at every step.

To throw dust in the eyes of Spain, Elizabeth was to affect much indignation at these adventurers, whom she was to disclaim, and denounce as pirates, or describe as servants of the Prince of Orange. The admirals who countenanced or succoured them were to be imprisoned, and generally everything was to be done which might screen the Government from the charge of collusion with the infringers of treaty. Raleigh foresaw that Elizabeth might oppose some objection to his policy, based on conscientious motives. Of this difficulty he gets rid in the following off-hand manner:—

"I hold it as lawful in Christian policy to prevent a mischief betimes as to revenge it too late, especially seeing that God himself is a party in the common

quarrels now afoot, and his enemies' disposition towards your Highness and His Church manifestly seen, although, by God's merciful providence, not yet thoroughly felt."

Warming with his subject, the writer throws a prophetic glance into the future, and discerns in beatific vision England's acquisition of the empire of the ocean. What was to him prophecy is to us matter of history; he showed what by a wise policy might be forthwith accomplished; it took centuries to ripen his project, but the world witnessed the ripening of it, when not a hostile flag in Christendom could flout the breezes on the ocean in defiance of British power. Weighing, at a later period in the Bloody Tower, the chances of a great general who should invade England, his decision was less sanguine than in 1577, when he wrote thus:—

"This realm, being an island, shall be discharged from all foreign pillage, if all the monarchies of the world should join against us, *so long as Ireland shall be in safe keeping*, the league with Scotland maintained, and further amity concluded with the Prince of Orange and the King of Denmark, by which means also your Majesty shall engraft and glue to your crown in effect all the northern and southern traffic of the world, so that none shall then be able to cross the seas but subject to your Highness's devotion."

Familiar with the besetting sin of the times, Raleigh concludes his 'Discourse' with these earnest and brilliant

words: "If your Majesty like to do it at all, then would I wish your Highness to consider that delay doth oftentimes prevent the performance of good things, for the wings of man's life are plumed with the feathers of death."*

To uphold that high state of prosperity which Raleigh foretold for England, he laid it down as a necessary condition that Ireland should be in safe keeping. But how was it to be rendered safe? The experience of five hundred years has not even yet solved the problem. In those days hypocrisy played a conspicuous part in the great scheme of human action, and Raleigh evidently prided himself on the adroitness with which he recommended it to his sovereign; but his conception of the thing was poor indeed, compared with the stupendous theories of deceit and delusion that issued from the workshops of the Vatican and the Escorial.

While the design of the Armada was slowly taking shape in the mind of Philip, he consented to soothe the impatience of Rome by small supplies of human victims, offered up from time to time on the altars of bigotry and ambition. Simultaneously with Raleigh's plan for depriving the Catholics of their fast-day luxuries, Spain and Rome were contriving how to open up the fountains of misery in Ireland, under pretence of promoting the interests of religion. Several

* 'Discourse to the Queen,' November 6th, 1577. State Paper Office.

Irish gentlemen, the prototypes of our Fenians, were incessantly flitting about the Continent, exerting their aboriginal blarney, now at one court, now at another, to obtain a charitable contingent of rascals to aid their countrymen in expelling the English. I have said that a letter written from Madrid, of the same date with Raleigh's 'discourse,' indicated the beginning of proceedings in which the young adventurer was to be concerned. The letter likewise indicated, both to writer and recipient, death amid the Irish bogs, though for the present it inspired them with no small hope. Dr. Sanders, who, in his efforts to disturb Elizabeth's realm, appears to have had a weary time of it, complains to his correspondent, Dr. Allen, of the strange slowness and procrastination of kings. "The Vicar of Christ," he says, "was much swifter in his eagerness to shed blood," and therefore would consent to collect and despatch into Ireland two thousand men by way of earnest.* This force the doctor laments to think would hardly suffice to do much against England; but in the sister island, where Catholicism and barbarism were more rampant, he felt cheered by the persuasion that something might be accomplished. Not being gifted with the skill to read the secret mind of kings, he supposed Philip to be in a state of coma, observing that he was as much afraid of war as a child of fire.

* Sanders to Allen, Nov. 6, 1577. State Paper Office.

Though the navigators on one hand, and the doctors on the other, were impatient to be at work, public affairs advanced with their accustomed slowness; it was long doubtful which party should win in the race of procrastination, though ultimately Spain vindicated to herself superiority in postponing the day of action. Gilbert and his friends brought into play all the activity of their characters in organizing their darling expedition, and evidently obtained Elizabeth's approval, since she permitted two of her near relatives, Henry and Francis, sons of Sir Francis Knollys, to take part in the enterprise. This, which seemed the harbinger of success, proved the ruin of the whole scheme. Gilbert naturally looked also among his kinsmen for officers to take command in his fleet, and secured the co-operation of three, Walter and George Raleigh, and Denny, one of his Devonshire cousins.

By the end of summer, 1578, Gilbert's fleet, consisting of eleven sail, manned with five hundred mariners and soldiers, assembled on the coast of Devonshire. What such an armament might have effected may be conjectured from the achievements of Hawkins and Drake, but whatever may have been the mental reach of Gilbert, or the daring of Raleigh, it may be doubted whether their want of practical knowledge would not, under any circumstances, have led to disaster. Among the commanders discord prevailed, so that though ready

for sea as early as the end of September, it was nearly two months later before the admiral found it practicable to hoist sail. The interval was consumed by bickerings, arising from the want of authority in the principal leaders. As was to be expected, the seamen who took part in such expeditions consisted of the most reckless frequenters of the ocean, who fled to its waves from the gaoler and the hangman—blasphemers, ruffians, assassins—to whom piracy furnished the only congenial occupation. By way of affording Gilbert a taste of their quality, they filled the whole town of Plymouth with brawl and riot, insulting the night-watch, and crowning their doings with murder. The Earl of Bedford, then Lord-lieutenant of Devonshire, on complaint of the towns-people, demanded that the malefactors should be delivered up to justice; but Henry Knollys, to whose ship they belonged, set the civil authorities at defiance, and thus, by insuring impunity to his crew, encouraged them to commit further excesses.

Towards Gilbert himself Knollys behaved with no less rudeness and insolence, which sometimes deepened into the grossest vulgarity. He boasted that, owing to his royal kinship, he was worth twenty knights; and on one occasion when Sir Humphrey invited him to dinner, declined his invitation, with the offensive remark, that "he had money to pay for his own dinner, and that the admiral might keep his trenchers for such

beggars as stood in need of his hospitality." It is matter of surprise that Captain Denny, Gilbert's own cousin, should have joined the party of such a man as Knollys, and have pushed his contempt of subordination so far as to send a formal challenge to the admiral. Every day these bickerings threatened to end in blood; in fact on one occasion while Sir Humphrey was absent on business, Henry Knollys, being second in command, was on the point of hanging Captain Miles Morgan at the yard-arm, and was only prevented by the admiral's return.

With a view, if not to put a stop to these quarrels, at least to set himself right with the court, Gilbert submitted the matter to the decision of the mayor of Plymouth, who, after hearing the evidence on both sides, pronounced judgment in favour of the admiral; upon which a certificate* was drawn up, signed by the magistrate himself, by Walter Raleigh, and several other persons of respectability. It had now become evident that the fleet must be dismembered, even though the whole enterprise should thereby be shipwrecked. Henry Knollys, with his brother Francis, Captain Denny, and other officers, broke away with four ships from the admiral, and betook themselves to the ocean, with the intention it was supposed of reaping, in defiance of law, whatever harvest piracy might

* November, 1578. MSS., State Paper Office.

supply. The letters written during these troubles by Sir Humphrey Gilbert to Walsingham are conceived in a deprecatory spirit, in the hope of allaying any anger which, through the force of blood, it might be feared, Elizabeth would feel; but she was too just to yield to any such ebullitions of temper. Gilbert she knew was a brave and faithful servant, for which reason she stood by him, and would suffer no motive derived from mere relationship to turn her from the path of duty.

At length, on the 19th of November,* Gilbert, with seven ships and three hundred and fifty men, set sail from Plymouth.

No incident in the life of Raleigh is enveloped more thoroughly in mystery than the circumstances of this enterprise. After quitting the shores of England, in what direction did the fleet sail? Did it proceed towards the banks of Newfoundland? or, taking a southwesterly course, did it, with the design above explained, make at once for the West Indies? From some facts, alluded to in the after-part of Raleigh's story, it may I think be inferred, that, despite the inadequacy of the means at his command, Sir Humphrey Gilbert plunged into the great undertaking, by a description of which Raleigh had sought to enthrall the imagination of Elizabeth. Without doubt, Raleigh, in one way or another, made himself intimately acquainted

* Gilbert to Walsingham, Nov. 12th, 1578. State Paper Office.

with the islands of the West Indies, as well as the havens on the main, and except this we know of no occasion on which he could have acquired personal knowledge of them before the date of his first voyage to Guiana. Captain Barlow, addressing to Raleigh, in 1584, an account of the voyage which, in company with Amadas he made to Virginia, assumes his patron to be thoroughly familiar with the islands of the Mexican Gulf. So afterwards, when Gondomar was labouring to prevent Raleigh's last expedition, he appeared before the council with a book in his hand, describing the outrages perpetrated by him in his two voyages to the West Indies, by which I think he could have meant no others than those of 1578 and 1595. Again, previously to 1586, a book, now lost, was written, entitled, 'Sir Walter Raleigh's Voyage to the West Indies.' From the contents of this volume in the handwriting of the celebrated navigator, Sir James Lancaster, we discover that it was not the narrative of a voyage actually performed, but the platform of an enterprise which the writer wished to be undertaken; nevertheless, from the whole tenor of these 'Heads of Chapters' it seems clear that the reasoning is based in great measure on the information of an eye-witness.

An incident which befel Gilbert's fleet, probably in the seas of Tropical America, furnishes the reason why impenetrable obscurity was suffered to rest on nearly all

the circumstances of this expedition: in the spring, apparently of 1579, our countrymen came to action with a Spanish fleet, when, either through inferiority in strength, or scientific seamanship, they were defeated, with the loss of one of their principal ships, as well as of the gallant Captain Miles Morgan, who was slain in the engagement. Towards the end of spring, or beginning of summer, Gilbert and Raleigh, with the wreck of their fleet, returned to England, where, in spite of ill-success, their courage and enterprise won for them admiration and influence in the best circles.

A few years before, Gilbert had presented to the Government a treatise in which he undertook to prove the existence of a northwest passage to China and India, strengthening his own arguments by traditions and conjectures, which he found in such writers as Gemma Fricius, Pliny, and Cornelius Nepos. Raleigh shared his brother's belief respecting the northwest passage; and in the seventeenth chapter of his lost book, pointed out that double method of discovery, which after a profuse sacrifice of life and treasure has at length in our day been crowned with success. The great aim being to advocate the policy of colonizing North America, he mentions as an incidental advantage that, "By these colonies the northwest passage to Cathay and China may easily, quickly, and perfectly be searched out, as well by river and overland as by sea."

CHAPTER III.

HIS GAY ASSOCIATES IN LONDON.

A MAN whose story soon afterwards came to be closely interwoven with that of Raleigh, who took the hazardous step of introducing him to Leicester, was at this time immersed in transactions which had they been known would have barred all intimacy. While Raleigh and Gilbert were labouring to extend the power of Elizabeth, this man, Sir Warham St. Leger, had linked himself with those who sought her life. Like many other youthful adventurers, incapable of distinguishing the delusions of romance from the promptings of justice and honour, he eagerly fell in with those who discovered something chivalrous in venturing their necks for a captive queen. When Raleigh returned from France, where every popish cabaret rang with the name of Mary Stuart, he found London literally swarming with such adventurers, though both experience and principle kept him out of the circle of their influence.

St. Leger, of lighter mood and feebler intellect,

was drawn into the great vortex of the times which eddied perpetually about the gallows and the block. The foreign ambassadors then in London, especially those of France and Spain, made use of their diplomatic privileges to attempt the overthrow of the established Government.* On the Surrey side of the Thames, at the corner of a field abutting on Lambeth Marsh, lay Paris Garden,† which, like the most woody part of Hyde Park, was studded so thickly with trees that at noonday persons a short way off could scarcely be discerned. Along the river's edge, at some distance out in the water, ran a series of aits or islets densely covered with rushes and tall willows, amid which the noble representative of France carried on an intrigue with a dissolute milkmaid. The same nobleman frequented the neighbourhood of the aits for far worse purposes: where all is now bustle, steam, smoke, and mud, the broad waters then ran peacefully on a summer's night, seldom disturbed by the dip of an oar, or the sound of voices from the banks, save when, in obedience to the law against night-walkers, the formidable watch with halberd and lantern scoured the lanes and patches of greensward lying beneath the city and the marsh. On the northern bank of the river, the spacious and

* Fleetwood to Vice-Chamberlain July 12, 1578. State Paper Office.

† Ibid.

massive dwellings of the nobility threw their shadows over the water, to which their inmates descended by long dark stairs, at the foot of which light wherries and stately barges generally lay ready for use.

In the warm nights of July, 1578, Paris Gardens* became the focus of a mysterious conspiracy, carried on by the French minister, Sir William Morgan, and Sir Warham St. Leger: at a late hour each of these individuals, setting out from the stairs of tavern or private residence, crossed the river, and shooting in behind the aits as behind a barrier reef, landed unperceived. When they reached what was aptly enough called "the bower of conspiracy,"† serving men with drawn rapiers were posted at the mouths of the lanes opening into the garden for the defence of their masters in case of extremity.

While they were engaged in deliberation, the watch, headed by Brightman, one of the lord-keeper's men, who as the plotters found was no Dogberry, came up and ordered them to disperse. To this the two knights made a civil reply: but the ambassador, blustering in King Cambyses vein, said he was a privileged person, and refused obedience; till the watch, observing that he and his men were breaking the law against night-

* In 1570, Leslie Bishop of Ross had carried on, in the same place, his treasonable intrigues with the Earl of Southampton. Burghley, 'Notes on Elizabeth's Reign,' June 7th, 1570.

† Fleetwood, ubi supra.

walkers, threatened, unless he instantly departed, to seize and carry him over by force to the Recorder's house in the City.

The Morgan here grouped with St. Leger, was probably brother to that Thomas Morgan who, while watching over Mary Stuart's interests in Paris, was seized and confined in the Bastile.

An order now came from Burleigh to the Recorder, directing him to send St. Leger to the Court, then at Havering. Fleetwood, however, was no match for the gallant knight, for while he was thundering at the gates of Chandos Place,* sculling up and down to reconnoitre it from the Thames, or plunging into the darkness of Paris Garden, St. Leger quietly dropped down the river in a boat, and was beyond reach; having before his departure excused himself by letter to the council, whom he coolly informed of his inability to obey its orders, because his horses were at grass. From this date Warham remains out of sight, till we find him with Raleigh in Ireland, doing justice in Elizabeth's behalf on John of Desmond at Cork.

In the portion of Raleigh's career at which we are now arrived, it will be necessary to reject several long-received anecdotes and suppositions which are at variance with fact, and to introduce upon the scene some new personages, who played a part hitherto un-

* Fleetwood to Burleigh, July 12, 1578. State Paper Office.

suspected in the Raleigh drama. Naunton and Lloyd, with nearly all subsequent biographers, have had recourse to circumstances purely apocryphal to account for Raleigh's introduction at Court. They fancy that, on his return from Ireland, he was cited before the council to answer certain charges preferred against him by the Lord-deputy Grey in person. Naunton, one of the basest of Raleigh's traducers, affirms, as of his own knowledge, that though Grey had justice on his side, Raleigh's eloquence not only prevailed with the council, but likewise "Won the Queen's ear in a trice."* Lloyd, an inveterate pedant, amuses his readers with a critical estimate of Raleigh's oration, which he describes after the manner of the "old man eloquent."

The whole of this tissue of ingenuity is a fiction, Raleigh stood in need of no such machinery for making his abilities known to Elizabeth or the chief persons about her. One of the most curious incidents in the life of Leicester is this: being desirous of ascertaining his chances of becoming the Queen's husband, he commissioned one of her women to seize adroitly on some soft and happy moment, to make the most of his merits and press his suit. Elizabeth, after her usual shrewd manner, affected to be angry, saying that since she had refused the greatest princes in Europe, it was not likely she should marry one of her own subjects.

* Fragmenta Regalia.

As Leicester's fears at the moment glanced at one of those great princes—the Duc d'Anjou—Elizabeth's indignant reply contained all the information he needed.

It is not, however, to this part of the subject that I wish to direct the reader's attention, but to the fact that the lady intrusted with so delicate a mission by Leicester was Raleigh's aunt, the friend and confidant of Elizabeth's girlhood, Mrs. Catherine Ashley, who had some years before presented Raleigh's half-brother, Gilbert, to the Queen.*

Again, the comptroller of her household, Lord Hunsdon, was Raleigh's near relative: so likewise was Herbert,† earl of Pembroke, the husband of Mary, Sir Philip Sidney's sister: in the same relationship stood Lord Charles Howard of Effingham,‡ with many other noblemen and gentlemen, holding places of trust about the queen's person, as we shall hereafter find her pointing out to Lord Grey in her own peremptory manner.

It will therefore excite no surprise to learn that Raleigh lived on terms of intimacy with the principal personages in England; but among his associates at this time there was one individual respecting whom it is necessary to enter into some details, since he exercised

* Hooker, 'Supply to the Irish Chronicle,' Holingshed, vi., 367.

† Walsingham to Sir Edward Stradling, 'Stradling Papers.' See also Raleigh's Letters on the same subject, pp. 22, 23.

‡ Dedication to 'Discovery of Guiana.'

almost from the outset upon Raleigh's fortunes an influence scarcely less sinister than that of Essex; this was Edward de Vere, seventeenth earl of Oxford, a man of genius and a poet, but of manners so dissolute, and character so flagitious, that he may for his crimes and vices be looked upon as one of the prodigies of his age.*

His father John, dying while he was yet a minor, the wardship of his person and estates was given by Elizabeth to Burleigh. On the grasping ambition of this minister nothing need be said: he was a new man, who aimed steadily through life at interweaving the fortunes of his family with those of the noblest and most opulent houses in the land. Homer attributes to the great Grecian seer a knowledge of the past, the present, and the future: in the first and second, Burleigh was probably his equal; but to the future he was unfortunately as blind as the Duke of Norfolk's fool. When the wardship, therefore, of the young de Vere fell into his hands, his fancy was evidently kindled by the lucky chance of matching his daughter Anne with a scion of one of the most ancient houses in England, whose princely lordships and manors lay profusely scattered over the southern portions of the realm, from the Land's End to the banks of the Ribble.

* 'True Declaration by Charles Arundel,' 1581, without date of month. Some abatement may be made from the virulence of this man's accusations; though his opinion of de Vere differs very little from that of many other contemporaries.

Not long after Oxford's marriage with Lady Anne Cecil, reckless intrigue brought his friend and kinsman, the Duke of Norfolk, within swing of the headsman's axe. De Vere's alliance with Burleigh then seemed likely to stand him in good stead. Joining his own entreaties to those of his wife, he earnestly sought to preserve Norfolk from the block. Nothing, however, could turn aside Elizabeth's indignation;—the duke suffered; and to account for the monstrous life afterwards led by Oxford, he is said on that occasion to have vowed the ruin of his wife and children, in order, through their agonies, to wound and torture his father-in-law. His first step was to thrust away Lady Oxford from his bed and house, with a miserably parsimonious allowance; after which, to render his desertion more complete, he obtained the Queen's permission to travel. His professed religion at that time must have been Catholicism, otherwise he could not even pretend to have received from the Duke of Alva the post of lieutenant-general to the Spanish forces in the Netherlands.*

* Arundel's words are:—"At his being in Flanders, the Duke of Alva, as he will constantly affirm, grew so much to affect him for those rare parts he saw in him as he made him his lieutenant-general over all the army then in the Low Country," 'Brief Declaration.' State Paper Office. The French ambassador in Spain, affirms that Philip hated Alva because, by mismanagement, he caused the loss of Flanders, Raumer, i., 198.

Dislodged from this position by the Queen's order, he returned to England; but after a brief stay, again repaired to the Continent, crossed the Alps, and in the quarrels of Genoa commanded, as he affirmed, a body of thirty thousand men, sent northwards by the Pope to put a period to the Civil Wars. Having distinguished himself by his prudence and sagacity at Genoa, this ancestor of the renowned Captain Lemuel Gulliver proceeded to Venice, by whose priests and courtesans he appears to have been equally fascinated. The exact date of his return is of no moment: he was in London when Raleigh and Gilbert came back from their unsuccessful expedition against the West Indies, after which the former, losing sight for a while of colonial projects, devoted himself to the diversions and excitements of social life. But in times of peril even these are perilous. The two religions which combated each other with sword and pike on the Continent and in Ireland, and longed to use the same weapons in England, were for the present forced to content themselves with the weapons of logic, good or bad, whenever two or three were gathered together at the social board.

Elizabeth, large as was her heart, could not take into favour all the noblemen of England at once; yet those who were refused a share in her lavish love converted their exclusion into a ground of hostility. Raleigh

already enjoyed the friendship of Leicester, and was for that reason obnoxious to the earl of Oxford, whose graceful person, gorgeous apparel, and proficiency in the fatal art of dancing, inspired him with the ambition to supplant Leicester and Hatton in the Queen's regards Raleigh himself, whose bronzed countenance, martial bearing, and haughty demeanour had not yet attracted the Tudor's notice, though he may have thrown "his brave silken cloak"* upon a narrow splash, to enable her delicate feet to traverse it without a soil, had won nothing beyond a passing smile, and probably neither expected nor desired to win more. He was only generally interested therefore in the dangerous topics discussed habitually in the circles he frequented—in Fish Street, Fleet Street, at Northumberland House, and at the earl of Oxford's mansion in Broad Street or Westminster.†

It is well known that throughout Elizabeth's reign no topic excited in nobles or people so keen an interest as the question of her marriage, with which that of the succession was indissolubly bound up. One heir-apparent she held with a firm grasp in durance at Tutbury with a fixed determination not to let go her hold: another heir-apparent, in the perfume of her budding

* Nichols, 'Progresses,' i., 469.

† Interrogatories to be demanded of Charles Arundel, 1581. State Paper Office.

charms* breathed, far beyond Elizabeth's reach, the soft air of Granada, amid pomegranate and citron groves, under the eye of a gloomy but fond father: a third, now thirteen years of age, flitted about the northern frontier of England, surrounded by ministers, some of whom were ready to sacrifice him to Elizabeth, while others saw their own advantage in keeping alive and putting forward his claims in all practicable ways.

Accordingly, when the de Veres, the Percies, the Arundels, and the Howards, brought together their friends to eat venison, and drain bowls of sack, topics bordering closely upon treason were often introduced: it was, for example, whispered among them that, "the King of Scots began now to put on spurs to his heels, and as soon as the matter of Monsieur were assured to be at an end, that then, within six months, we should see the queen's majesty to be the most troubled and discontented person living."†

One chief point aimed at by de Vere was the overthrow of Leicester, whose place he panted to occupy in the Queen's favour. To compass this end, wild and various were the plans he organized, sometimes seeking to awaken Elizabeth's fears, sometimes to pique her vanity,

* The visitor to the Museo at Madrid will probably admire the portrait of this princess, Isabella Clara Eugenia, by Cuelo, which may be regarded as one of the ornaments of the Gallery.

† Interrogatories MSS. State Paper Office.

sometimes to stimulate her indignation, by enumerating Leicester's crimes. Suspecting that these schemes might fail, Oxford had recourse to other contrivances.

At the period of which we are speaking, he possessed two mysterious and dangerous books, one called 'The Book of Babies,' the other, 'The Book of Prophecies.' In the former the author had probably collected all the rumours then circulated throughout the realm, of Elizabeth's offspring by Leicester. The general belief appears to have been that, when the Queen found herself enciente, she left London and went on a progress into the country, where secretly, in some remote castle, she gave birth to her child, which was spirited away, and brought up carefully under the eyes of Leicester's friends. What credit was to be given to such stories de Vere, in all likelihood, never considered, but in proportion to his hopes of success with the Queen, or fears of failure, withheld or exhibited the 'Book of Babies,' merely to have seen which was looked upon as akin to treason.

The other mysterious production, 'The Book of Prophecies,' seems to have been of subsequent manufacture. The history of its origin is extravagantly wild: by the aid of a priest, he was enabled to enter into amiable relations with the devil, under whose directions he made a series of paintings, explanatory of future events. These, when finished, he bound together in a

volume, and called 'The Book of Prophecies.' The process of raising his sable majesty, which appears to have been conducted in due form, took place in a little house in the Tilt-yard at Greenwich. Of this sort of "skimble scamble" stuff Oxford's conversation appears to have commonly consisted. The chief aim of his intercourse with Raleigh seems to have been to detach him from Leicester, towards whom, as well as towards his friends and kindred, he cherished a mortal hatred.

In September, 1579, this feeling at length exhibited itself in acts of violence: going into the Tennis Court, he found there Leicester's kinsman, Philip Sidney, and immediately conceived the plan of insulting the uncle through the nephew. Sidney, at the time, was engaged in playing, while the French commissioners, then waiting for an audience of her Majesty, were watching him from a gallery which overlooked the Tennis Court. This fact may have been an additional inducement to de Vere to persist in the insult he meditated. Going up to Sidney, he ordered him to retire, as he himself wished to play. Philip, prouder of being a Dudley than a Sidney, replied as became a Dudley, upon which de Vere called him a puppy. Unable to curb his anger, Philip, upon this, gave him the lie, and touching the hilt of his sword by way of intimating his intention, walked out of the Tennis Court, and not doubting that the Earl would follow him, waited outside. The Earl, however,

continued his play, without deigning to take any further notice of his adversary.

This story is told throughout with variations, it being sometimes stated that Sidney immediately sent a challenge to the Earl; but, as we find from Charles Arundel's papers, preserved in the Record Office, it was the Earl himself who sent the challenge. "He employed Raleigh and myself with a message to this effect, that the question might be honourably ended; Mr. Sidney accepted gladly thereof, and desired much it might not be deferred; which, when he heard, never meaning anything less, as after it appeared, told us plainly he was not to hazard himself, having received such an injury, and therefore he had another course, and that was to have him murdered in his lodging; the manner how he would have done it, and what words I gave him, and how I withstood it, let my Lord Harry who dealt very honourably, and Raleigh as honestly, report."*

Up to this time Raleigh appears to have stood high in de Vere's estimation, for he not only shared with him his venison and sack, but whispered into his ear his most important secrets; one of which was that Monsieur laboured to allure him into France by magnificent promises. Gradually, however, an ill-feeling crept into their intercourse. Not falling readily into de Vere's

* Aubrey, probably without foundation, says Raleigh was Oxford's second in some duel, ii. 511.

plans for making away secretly with a number of their friends and intimates, Raleigh incurred his resentment, which ultimately deepened into deadly hatred. Reflecting, probably, that the young soldier would carry with him too many of his secrets to Ireland, Oxford took measures for cutting him off while he was within reach; but whether the projected instrument was to have been the dagger or the bowl, the design proved abortive.

Several of the accusations brought against de Vere are so monstrous that I should hesitate to extend the least credit to them, were it not that he did certainly, on many occasions, act and speak after a fashion which justified his acquaintances in regarding him as a consummate villain, or a madman. Hatred of Leicester appears to have been his ruling passion. The hero of 'Father Parson's Romance' had no doubt his foibles, or whatever else we may choose to call them: men died after supping with him; if he fell in love with a beautiful married woman, her husband soon after was carried of by a fever, and she became his own; Italian physicians, adepts in manufacturing their country's physic, found an asylum in his house, from which they were believed to send forth among the Earl's antagonists and enemies shafts tipped with sudden death; but if behind this tissue of popular persuasions any truth really lay hidden, the fact not only defied the scrutiny of contemporaries, but has continued to defy the re-

searches of historians for three hundred years. To those around him, from the Queen to the scullion, Leicester was all suavity and polish; extravagant in his magnificence, ambitious of honours, insatiable of opulence; but in his intercourse with all classes, easy, pleasant, measured in his language, inspiring confidence, and often commanding unswerving attachment. No wonder, therefore, that he appeared to be the foremost man of his time, highest in the Queen's favour, most potent in the government, disposing of places and offices almost like a king, which he was only prevented from becoming by a few false steps or untoward accidents.

To be the rival of such a man de Vere was no way qualified; he inwardly, moreover, felt his inferiority, and was keenly stung by the consciousness. Knowing, however, that steel or aquetta would, if skilfully used, rid himself of this perpetual eyesore, he is said to have aimed in various ways at accomplishing his purpose. But Leicester had contrived to surround himself with a multitude of friends and adherents, not one of whom could, for the time at least, be tempted to touch his life. De Vere, we are assured, tried many of them—Cheke, Arthur Gorges, Raleigh—but failing in his manœuvres, sought to imitate in a clumsy manner what he believed to be the policy of his enemy. No credible account ever represented Leicester babbling over his cups of the assassinations he meditated; if he took off men it was

in a way which appeared to make nature his instrument, or at least his accomplice; but the murders de Vere intended to perpetrate he talked of openly, boasting of the means at his disposal, his barges on the river, his store of powder and shot, his calivers, his disciplined assassins ever ready to use them.

This noisy method of going about his work enabled friends to put his intended victims on their guard. John Cheke and Arthur Gorges were to have been shot while returning to their lodgings across Richmond Green; Sidney was to have been stillettoed in his bed, Leicester as he descended his garden stairs, Raleigh in some way not specified. Threatened men, however, according to the old proverb, live long, at least in some cases. Nine years later, Leicester is believed to have had ratsbane put into his porridge at Cornbury; and Sidney, two years earlier, fell in the field; but honest John Cheke, the friend of Leicester's friend, Lord Grey, in little more than twelve months from the utterance of de Vere's menace, was picked off by a ball, either native or foreign, in the trenches before Del Oro. Whether de Vere had the satisfaction of causing his death or not, Cheke is said to have formed one of the triumvirate whom that noble person destined to secret extinction.

We have seen above that Sidney was among the principal objects of de Vere's hatred. Why he was so is obvious; he was Leicester's nephew, and as such,

strongly opposed to the French faction at Court, which was headed by de Vere. Leicester had lost at this time much of his influence over the Queen, by the discovery of his marriage with Lettice Knollys; but the old fire still smouldered in her heart, so that little would be required to fan it again into a flame. Philip Sidney, who though young, had acquired a reputation for prudence, as well as for proficiency in the art of writing, was commissioned to draw up an appeal to Elizabeth's feelings, failings, judgment, and religion, in opposition to the French match. He is supposed to have been urged to take the step by his father and Walsingham;* but it may be safely assumed that his chief instigator was Leicester, who in all likelihood inspired, if he did not draw up, the famous letter addressed by Sidney to the Queen, in the interval between New Year's Day and the date of Raleigh's departure for Ireland. Terrible results were expected to spring from this audacious missive, though, as Elizabeth doubtless knew in whose interest it was written and who had prompted it, she limited her resentment to mere outward show, inwardly gratified all the while by so strong a proof of Leicester's jealousy and love. Sidney, however, deemed it politic to retire into the country, while his friend Raleigh directed his footsteps elsewhere.

* Fox Bourne, 'Life of Sidney,' p. 252.

CHAPTER IV.

PERPETRATES THE MASSACRE OF DEL ORO.

THE military preparations of Philip gave birth to alarm in many parts of Europe, because none could foresee what country was to be the object of attack. Gradually the conviction gained strength that Spain intended to direct her armaments against Elizabeth's dominions, which, in spite of treaties, were from time to time invaded by bodies of Spanish and Italian adventurers, who, according to their success or failure, might be acknowledged or disowned. It was rightly judged that England could be most effectually weakened through Ireland; and accordingly the policy adopted by the Pope and the King of Spain was to excite rebellion in that part of the realm, in order to distract the attention, and waste the resources of the English government. In 1578 the Irish rebels were promised the aid of a considerable force; but armies on paper have always been more numerous than those on the

muster-ground. When, therefore, the Irish Jesuit Allen, Dr. Sanders, whom Lord Oxford would have seated on the papal chair, and the Earl of Desmond's cousin, James Fitzmaurice, sailed for Ireland, their followers scarcely exceeded seven hundred men.* With these, however, they doubled the southern headlands of the island, and pushing out into the open sea, beheld rising up, in rugged grandeur before them, the loftiest mountains in Ireland, separated from each other by lovely well-wooded valleys and holding in their craggy embrace the Killarney Lakes, with a multitude of coombes and dingles. James Fitzmaurice, familiar with his cousin's domains, selected Smerwick for the point of disembarkation, where, close to the shore, the invaders hastily threw up a fort, on which they bestowed the name of Del Oro. To protect their crude work from heretical bullets, the doctors consecrated them in due form, though this did not prevent their falling into decay, and having to be rebuilt in little more than a year.

While the Catholics were busy at this out-of-the-way intrenchment, erecting or repairing ramparts, quarrelling, plotting, swearing, or saying mass, Captain Raleigh, with a company of a hundred men, his would-be assassin de Vere's agent amongst the rest, dropped down the

* See Raleigh, 'History of the World,' vi., 23, where he suggests a parallel between the Spaniards and the Mamertines.

Thames, January 24th, 1580, and proceeded to the Isle of Wight. After a fortnight's detention by contrary winds he again put to sea, and reached Cork on the 22nd of February. Immediately on landing he found himself in the midst of those obstructions and difficulties which seem to be the natural growth of the Irish soil. His men wanting pay, he made application to the Irish functionaries, who informed him that he and his troopers could only be considered under their jurisdiction from the day of their landing, and referred him for all arrears to the Home Government.

He at once therefore addressed a letter to his patron Leicester, describing his position, and complaining that he had been forced to satisfy out of his own private funds the demands of the soldiers. To his request that the money thus become due should be paid with all convenient speed to his agent, who was to deliver the letter to the Earl, I know not what answer was vouchsafed; but in all likelihood both he and they, like the rest of the army, depended thenceforward very much upon chance for the means of keeping soul and body together.

The field of war, on which for the next two years Raleigh was to be employed, resembled few others in the Christian world. Society in Ireland had scarcely advanced beyond the stage described by Hesiod:* little

* Mr. Hans Hamilton, 'Preface to Irish Calendar,' p. 3.

agriculture existed, though Shane O'Neil had a few years before exerted his influence for its encouragement; the country was governed by innumerable chiefs, nearly always engaged in mutual hostilities. The galloglass mounted on his small but bony and indefatigable horse, with battleaxe, generally bloody, on his shoulder; the kern, light, fleet, remorseless, muffled in his cloak,* armed with skene or rapier, with conscience at the command of his officer or priest, scoured the country singly or in bands, firing the habitations of the English, killing their cattle, ripping up their women, and perpetrating every other atrocity which national hate could inspire. On the other hand, the English soldiers revenged crime with crime; their acts fully equalling those of the kern and galloglass in recklessness and ferocity.

Still to Raleigh there was nothing new in all this: from the age of seventeen he had been habituated to the worst excesses of military license; for in the history of the world there is not a blacker page than that which describes the religious struggles in France.

Until the English ministers should appoint a new Lord-deputy, with full power to deal with the rebellion, Sir William Pelham,† who owed his elevation to the Council of Ireland, exercised supreme command. Neither

* Spenser, 'View of the State of Ireland.'

† Hooker, p. 434.

as a statesman, however, nor as a general, was he qualified to cope with the difficulties of his situation. Nearly the whole island was in a state of insurrection: priests going from castle to castle, from cabin to cabin, stimulated noble and peasant to take up arms for the church; mountains, bogs, woods, valleys, swarmed with the fanatical acolytes of Rome; the Geraldines were at the head of large forces, while the Spaniards and Italians, making incessant forays from Del Oro and other fortresses, helped to enlarge the circle of murder and devastation.

From February till June 1580, neither chronicle nor calendar makes reference to Raleigh; but in that sunny month he presents himself engaged in no very enviable employment,* though characteristic enough of the times. James, brother to the Earl of Desmond, venturing with reckless daring into the neighbourhood of Cork, to enjoy the congenial pastime of ravaging the lands of his personal enemy, Cormac Mac Teigh, sheriff of that city, a fight ensued, during which James had the ill-luck to be made prisoner by a smith, who manacled and concealed him among thickets till the contest was over. The sheriff then obtaining possession of the prisoner, conveyed intelligence of his capture to the Lord Justice, who ordered him to be put on his trial at Cork.

* Hooker, p. 433.

At this stage of the proceedings, the Geraldine was handed over to Sir Warham St. Leger and Captain Raleigh; by whom, after he had been indicted, condemned, and sentenced, he was hanged, drawn, and quartered; and, in conformity with the barbarism of the times, the fragments of his wretched body were gibbeted on the city walls, to be devoured by kites and ravens.

Perplexed by the affairs of Ireland—which in fact have been always perplexing—Elizabeth's ministers now sought by a change of men to remedy the inherent defects of their system. Wherever Catholicism exists in its natural state, good government is impossible: sacerdotal celibacy, the confessional, and spiritual subordination to a foreign potentate being only compatible with despotism.

To dissolve the spell of Romish influence, and bring back the Irish to their allegiance, Burleigh and Walsingham could think of nothing better than to send over, as Deputy, Leicester's friend, Lord Arthur Grey, of Wilton, a ruthless Puritan,* the sternness of whose character had been exasperated by a military education. It may seem strange that a nobleman of such a temper should have chosen for his secretary Edmund Spenser, a poet whose genius seems to have had little bias for war; but his friend Raleigh was a Leicestrian, his

* Birch, 'Memoirs of Elizabeth,' i., 4.

other friend Philip Sidney was half a Dudley, so that it is not surprising that, being desirous of advancing his fortunes, they should have recommended him to Grey, who went over to reduce the favourite's principles to practice.

With the Lord-deputy's doings generally I have no concern. He reached Dublin on the 12th of August, and on the 7th of September, Elizabeth's birthday, Sir William Pelham relinquished into his hands the sword of office. Impatient to extirpate the enemies of his sovereign, Grey soon afterwards left Dublin, and marched westwards at the head of eight hundred men, horse and foot, under the command of Captains Raleigh, Zouch, Denny, and Macworth. At Rakele, Grey was met by the Earl of Ormond, who came thither to relinquish his credentials as Governor of Munster.

All Ireland within the pale was now in a state of alarm, all without the pale in high exultation, for on the 14th of September a fresh force of six or seven hundred Spaniards and Italians had disembarked near the Dingle, where they repaired and took possession of the fort Del Oro. The foreign commanders having opened a communication with the insurgents, concerted with them the plan of a general rebellion, while Desmond with his followers hung in flying columns over the heights of Munster, to reconnoitre the movements of the English general, divert his supplies, and,

if fortune favoured, by forming a junction with the foreigners, to surround and cut him off.

Grey's forces were certainly few to cope with swarms of insurgents, supported by a formidable body of disciplined Spaniards, and the inveterate hostility of the whole country, where rebellion had to be trampled out at every step. Nevertheless, the fierce Puritan, knowing neither fear nor fatigue, advanced rapidly towards Smerwick Bay, where, in conformity with the orders of the British Government, a naval force under the command of Admiral Winter was to aid him in his operations, and furnish his army with supplies.

When Grey broke up his camp at Rakele, Raleigh, ever bent upon action, remained behind with his company, which he posted in ambush about the field. Scarcely had the lances and glittering helmets of the English disappeared among the rocks and hollows ere a troop of kerns, who from the surrounding woods had been reconnoitring our army, rushed into the deserted camp to collect such articles as should be left behind, and slaughter any loiterers they might fall in with. While they were busily engaged in ransacking the tents, Raleigh's men surrounded and captured them. Among the gang was one fellow laden with withe halters; "To what end did you bring these with you?" inquired Raleigh. Intrepid as his interrogator, the kern replied, "To hang up any English churl I might

get hold of."—"Good," answered Raleigh; "but as the case stands, they will serve just as well to hang up an Irish kern:" and forthwith ordered the daring Celt, whose courage should have saved him, to be suspended from the next tree. The rest of the prisoners having been taken to the Lord-deputy's head-quarters, were dealt with according to their supposed deserts.

It was now October. Autumn, usually mild in Ireland, had prematurely given place to winter; stormy winds, accompanied by a deluge of rain, set in from the Atlantic; on bog, morass, and fen, in ravine and dingle, the floods were out, every rill became a brook, every brook a torrent. The English soldiers, deficient in everything but arms and courage, marched through mire almost to the knee, upheld by the example of their general, who, subordinating everything to a sense of duty, pressed forward eagerly towards the enemy, and at length, on the 2nd of November, pitched his camp within eight miles of Del Oro.*

Urged by his impatience, Grey had outrun the movements of Winter's fleet, as well as of the transports, on the arrival of which his troops depended for provisions. Though so near the foe, with whom he longed to grapple, he could therefore do nothing but cast wistful looks at the sea, in the hope of discerning the English

* Grey to Elizabeth, November 12th, 1580, 'Irish Papers,' State Paper Office.

flag in the offing. Reviewing hastily his own position, he says, "Now, when almost in despair, news came to me, first, that three bands, which I had appointed to follow me, were coming at hand. I was leaping to horse to meet them, when another messenger in great haste brought word that Sir William Winter, with the ships, was at the Ventry, and would next morning, if the wind held, be at Smerwick." Next day, the admiral's flag-ship, followed by the rest of the fleet, floated into the bay, and the Lord-deputy rode down to the shore to hold conference with Winter. The plan of attack was then agreed upon. Winter was to disembark several great guns, which, under cover of darkness, the sailors were to drag up the heights, and plant in a position commanding the fort, upon which they were to play as soon as the general should be in readiness to assault it from the other side.

Though now, at the distance of three hundred years, the events then taking place on Smerwick Bay may appear insignificant, they were looked upon in a very different light then. The Spanish force in Del Oro, small as it was, constituted, in public estimation, the vanguard of the greatest military force then existing in the world, which, for aught that was known in England or Ireland, might at any moment heave in sight on the decks of an armada generally deemed invincible. To judge fairly, therefore, of Grey's proceedings, we

must remember that he acted with this fact constantly before his mind's eye. The enemy intrenched on Elizabeth's territories regarded her and the majority of her subjects as persons possessing no claim to Christian forbearance, to exterminate whom would be an act of piety. For individuals cherishing such convictions, Grey, whose charity rested on a basis quite as narrow as theirs, experienced nothing but supreme scorn mingled with detestation, so that he panted with eagerness to put them to the sword.

All necessary preparations made, he accordingly struck his camp, and advancing upon the fort, pitched it again by the dingle. Raleigh, it must not be forgotten, was in this camp, forming one of Lord Grey's council, riding forth among the other officers who formed his staff, and acquainted with the temper of the general's mind, looking forward probably to the horrors in which the operations of the siege culminated.

Next day, about noon, Grey, surrounded by his officers, rode towards the fort. "The Spaniards discharged a great piece at a troop of horsemen attending his honour, at which time the master of the horse very narrowly escaped, and the vanguard marching after my lord with a small company, drew near within danger of shot." How far Grey exhibited prudence on this occasion may be matter of question. The Spaniards in the fort, mindful of their old chivalrous customs, and

desirous of impressing the English with a high idea of their valour, sent forth from their gates a small body of infantry to skirmish with our general's escort, while their heavy ordnance discharged showers of round shot, and numerous musketeers, from trenches resembling our rifle-pits, made active use of their small-arms. By way of retaliation, Winter, who had now brought up his ships within range, opened fire upon the fort, and thus the affair of Del Oro commenced.

Grey with his retinue riding up to within a hundred and twenty paces of the rampart, the besieged discharged at them six hundred shot, but without hurting him or any of his followers.* Ammunition, with tools for the sappers and miners, having been landed from the fleet, and several great guns planted in position upon the heights, Grey moved his camp from the dingle and pitched within falcon-shot of Del Oro. At night, a number† of sailors supplied by Winter laboured at the trenches; two culverins were pushed on to within three hundred paces of the fort, and by two o'clock next day all the guns of the besieged were dismounted. Once and again, while the works were in progress, Grey summoned the foreigners to surrender;

* Anonymous to Walsingham, November 11th, 1580, 'Irish Papers,' State Paper Office.

† Grey to Elizabeth, November 12th; Vice-admiral Bingham to Walsingham, November 12th, 1580, 'Irish Papers,' State Paper Office.

but they had not yet lost heart, and fired his Puritan blood by replying that they were there by command of the Pope, who had taken Ireland from his heretical mistress, and given it to the King of Spain, adding, that what they held they would keep, and gain what they could. After this nothing remained but to keep the batteries in full play, which soon brought the invaders to alter the style of their language. All readers of Milton will remember his apostrophe to the soul of Sir John Cheke, who, besides teaching Cambridge and King Edward Greek, had become father to a brave son. This young man was one of those that were to have been picked off on Richmond Green by de Vere's assassins,* who we are assured followed him and Raleigh to Ireland, and, either by them or by the Spaniards, was now shot in the head, and fell mortally wounded at the general's feet.

Without entering further into a detail of operations, I will hurry on to the catastrophe, which, however shocking or bloody, was not, as has been asserted, without a parallel in the acts of Englishmen. Some have pretended that the Lord-deputy acted on this occasion under constraint, his own more merciful views, which he urged with tears, being overborne by the

* Charles Arundel, in his Brief Declaration, accuses the Earl of Oxford of projecting the murder of Cheke, October, 1581. State Paper Office.

paramount authority of the Council. From the character of the man, stern and implacable, we might, without positive testimony, have rejected such a version of the story; but there is no need of inference or conjecture. Grey is the historian of his own deed, and, instead of flinching from responsibility to man or God, describes what took place in exulting terms, challenging the approval of his contemporaries, and of posterity. If any narrative of barbarity or guilt possess an undying interest this does: what took place was not the fierce ebullition of some obscure soldier, it was the deliberate act of a nobleman, representing Elizabeth's person and policy in Ireland, and standing on the highest vantage-ground of English civilization, with the great historian of the world among his advisers, and the author of the 'Fairy Queen' by his side. Observe, then, with what imperturbable complacency, and with what undoubting conviction of approval, he relates to his queen the dark event which has met with so much condemnation from subsequent ages.

"I stayed," he says, "in the trench, and finding their shot more loosely to beat at us, and that ours did little or nothing annoy them, for we did not discern either by spikehole or smoke on the rampire where they lay, I endeavoured, as I might, to watch their next volley, and happily did it seem to come from under a certain building of timber, that at the point of the curtain was

set up, propped outwardly like a hovel and inwardly standing like a penthouse. I went straight to the baricadoes, and willed the gunners to point their pieces at that place; Sir William Winter made that shot at two tiers, our gentlemen were displaced and the trench at great . . . . and by that two other tiers were given, in great haste leaps one of them to the top of their vantmure with an ensign of a sheet, and craves a parley. Hereof straight was word sent me by John Zouch, who then had the ward, and I willed him and the trench-master, one Captain Piers, a very sufficient and industrious man, to know what they would. It was returned to me that their colonel would send one out to treat with me in case his messenger might safely go and return: upon advice, it was granted. There was presently sent unto me one Alexándro, their camp-master. He told me that certain Spaniards and Italians were there arrived upon fair speeches, which altogether vain and false they found, and that it was no part of their interest to molest or take any government from your majesty; for proof they were ready to depart as they came, and deliver into my hands their fort. Mine answer was, for that I perceived that their people to stand of two nations, Italian and Spanish, I would give no answer unless a Spaniard were likewise by. He presently went, and returned with a Spanish captain. I then told their captain that I knew their nation to

have an absolute prince; one that was in good league and amity with your majesty, which made me to marvel that any of his people should be found associated with them that went about to maintain rebels against you, and to disturb any your highness's governments, and taking that it could not be his king's will, I was to know by whom and for what cause they were sent. His reply was, that the king had not sent them, but one Don Martines de Ricaldi, governor for the king at Bilboa, had willed him to levy a band, and to repair with it to Santander, and there to be directed by their colonel here, whom he followed as a blind man, not knowing whither. The other avouched that they were all sent by the Pope for the defence of the Catholic faith. My answer was, that I would not greatly have marvelled if men, commanded by natural and absolute princes, did sometimes take in hand wrong actions; but that men of account, as some of them made show of being, should be carried into unjust, wicked, and desperate actions, by one that neither from God nor man could claim any princely power or empire, but indeed a detestable shaveling of the Antichrist and general ambitious tyrant over all principalities, and patron of the diabolical faith, I could not but greatly wonder. Their fault, therefore, appeared to be aggravated by the vileness of their commander, and that at my hands no conditions of composition they were to expect other than

that they should simply render me the fort, and yield themselves to my will for life or death.

With this answer he departed; after which there was one or two courses to and fro more, to have gotten a certainty for some of their lives; but finding that it would not be, the colonel himself, about sun-setting, came forth requesting respite with surcease of arms till the next morning, and then he would give me a resolute answer. Finding that to be but a gain of time for them, and loss of the same for myself, I definitively answered, I could not grant it, and therefore presently that he either took my offer or else return, and I would fall to my business. He then embraced my knees, putting himself to my mercy, only he prayed for the night he might abide in the fort, and that in the morning all should be put into my hands. I asked hostages for the performance: they were given. Morning came. I presented my forces in battle before the fort. The colonel came forth with ten or twelve of his chief gentlemen, trailing their ensigns, rolled up, and presented them to me with their lives and the fort." *

"Judex damnatur," it is said, "quum nocens absolvitur," knowing which as well as any man, Camden yet undertakes to apologize for Grey's proceedings at Del Oro. First, he affirms that the garrison equalled the English in number, while a body of fifteen hundred

* Grey to the Queen, November 12th, 1580. State Paper Office.

Irish rebels was encamped upon the heights near at hand; secondly, that the conquerors being without clothing or provisions, needed the spoils of the fort for their own subsistence; thirdly, he maintains, that Grey discussing beforehand with his officers the perilous situation of affairs, yielded with tears to the arguments by which they demonstrated the necessity of massacring the prisoners; fourthly, the queen, he goes on to say, when news of the horrible transaction reached England, wished it had not been done, detesting from her heart such cruelty; yet, he sneakingly adds, "though seemingly necessary."*

All those allegations are false, though both the assistants in the slaughter and they who had afterwards calmly to pronounce judgment on it naturally enough sought to palliate its atrocity. Vice-admiral Bingham, writing from the camp to Walsingham while his nerves were yet quivering from the effects of what he had witnessed, labours to shift off from the general some portion of the odium which he foresees such an act must bring upon the English. So, with the rhetoric of a

* Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth,' 1580. Instead of palliating the crime, the historian would have done better to prove by examples that it was altogether in the spirit of the times. Sir Francis Vere having taken a fort in Flanders, put the whole garrison, consisting of three hundred men, to the sword. 'Sidney Papers,' i., 309. So again when Mons fell into the hands of the French, eight hundred of its defenders were cut to pieces.

rough sailor anxious to speak truth, yet averse from censuring his commander, he stammers out as follows his extenuating recital: "They came," he says, "to the point of the rampire which we had beaten with the culverins with a white banner, bare-headed, and requested a parley, which my lord granted, in that they were contented the same night to surrender the place, with their lives, and all that was therein to my lord's will, to have mercy or not mercy as he should think good; yet for that it was night and no time to get them forth, they were, by my lord, repossessed till the morrow, but the best of them taken forth for gages or pledges, and we that notwithstanding followed our trench which we finished the same night within three score paces of the fort, and so ran the same all along their front where we meant to place our battery to which we brought the same night two pieces. On the 10th, early in the morning, my lord sent in divers gentlemen to take order that such munitions of powder and victual should be preserved to her Majesty's use as that was. The order was taken that the colonel, and captains, and chief officers should come forth and deliver up their ensigns, with the order and economy thereto belonging, which done, the band which had the ward of the day within then entered; but in the meantime were entered a number of the mariners upon the part next to the sea, which with the soldiers aforesaid having pos-

sessed the place, fell to revelling and spoiling and withal to killing, in which they never ceased while there lived one." *

So far Bingham. Another of those present at the massacre who recked little of the lives of Spaniards or Italians, enters with evident satisfaction into details respecting the variety and amount of the plunder:— "The forts were yielded, and the Irishmen and women hanged, and four hundred and upwards of Italians, Spaniards, Biscayans and others put to the sword. The colonel, captains, secretary, campmaster, and others of the best sort saved, to the number of twenty prisoners, and Dr. Sanders' chief man, an Englishman, Plunkett, a friar, and others, kept in store to be executed after examination to be had of them. It is confessed that five hundred more were daily looked for to be sent from the Pope, and the King of Spain to land here. There was found in the forts good store of money and a great quantity of biscuit, bacon, oil, fish, rice, beans, peas, and barley, being by computation victuals for their company for half a year. There was also found armour, morions, calivers, muskets, pikes, swords, barrels of bullets, and other kinds of furniture, to serve three months, and sundry tools for men of all occupations."†

* Bingham to Walsingham, Smerwick, November 12th, 1580, 'Irish Papers.' State Paper Office.

† Anonymous to Walsingham, Smerwick, November, 11th, 1580, 'Irish Papers.' State Paper Office.

In the narrative written by the general himself, I discover nothing to warrant Camden's statement, no trace of compunction, no allusion to tears, no regret for the hard necessity, which, had he been doubtful of the justice of his own conduct, he might have pleaded in palliation of the massacre. On the contrary, it is clear that his heart swelled with pride at the recollection of what he had done, the glory of which he was so desirous of monopolizing that he jealously abstained from mentioning the names of the officers, who, by the rules of the service or his express order, went in at the head of the bands charged with the slaughter of the prisoners. These officers, however, as we learn from another authority,* were Captains Raleigh and Macworth, who on that 10th of November perpetrated one of the most appalling atrocities in the history of the Irish wars. Doubtless they acted under orders, and had therefore no choice; yet it is not a pleasant thing to remember that the gallant of Elizabeth's court, the august prisoner of the Bloody Tower, the historian of the world, the martyr of Palace Yard, achieved willingly or unwillingly so detestable an act of cruelty.†

Grey's account of the massacre is as follows: "I sent straightway certain gentlemen to see their weapons and

* Hooker, 'Supply to the Irish Chronicle,' Holingshed vi., 439.

† In his 'History of the World,' Raleigh describes a parallel massacre, though on a much vaster scale, which took place during the Persian invasion of Greece. Works vi., 33.

armour laid down, and to guard the munition and victuals that were left, from spoil. Then put I in certain bands who straightway fell to execution. There were six hundred slain; munition and victual great store, though much wasted through the disorder of the soldiers, which in their fury could not be helped." The Spaniards and Italians of rank whose lives Grey spared were distributed among his favourite officers, that they might be enriched by the sums to be paid for their ransoms. It does not appear that Raleigh enjoyed any portion of this reward, for he seems to have already incurred the dislike of the general, which subsequent events deepened into rancour. To impress Elizabeth with the policy of conferring such rewards, Grey says: "Though your majesty may, and I doubt not will, have good service done, yet truly for toils and misery sustained in it, through length and hardness of ways, extremity of weather, coldness of season, continual watching and penury of victual, hardly by any soldiers will the like again be performed. Your majesty at this service had here but eight hundred men; they have pulled out of a fort well fortified, better victualled, excellently stored with armour and munition for six hundred men, whereof four hundred were as gallant and goodly personages as any I ever beheld."*

* Grey to Elizabeth, Smerwick, November 12th, 1580, 'Irish Papers. State Paper Office.

I now come to a still more startling feature of this transaction. Camden, though he wrote under James, who was ever eager to tarnish Elizabeth's fame, yet shrank from confessing to posterity that she had approved of the massacre of Del Oro. Such, however, is the fact. Cruelty lurked close beneath the surface of the Tudor blood, so that at the least provocation it leaped into life and prompted to acts of ferocity. Elizabeth moreover was a woman of the sixteenth century, brave and fearless in the midst of danger, but convinced, nevertheless, that over those who obviously sought her position, her crown, her life, the *lex talionis* gave her absolute jurisdiction. She regarded them as men do murderers on the highway whom the law of nature renders it permissible to destroy in self-defence. Besides, the age, I repeat, was a barbarous age, in which nothing was viewed in the light in which we behold it now. These facts I state not to justify Elizabeth but to explain her conduct. Standing at the bar of posterity, she thus enumerates her motives and makes her defence:—

By the Queen, your loving Sovereign,

ELIZABETH R.

TRUSTY AND WELL-BELOVED,—

As the most happy success you have lately had against certain invaders sent by the Pope, contained in

your letters brought unto us by our servant Denny, doth incomparably show the greatness of God's love and favour towards us, so your care and pains in following of the same, and courage in executing thereof, deserveth great thanks and commendations wherein you have answered by effects the good opinion we received of your sufficiency at the time of our choice made of you to supply the place you do now hold, not doubting there will appear greater fruits of your valour in reducing the diseased state of the realm to such conformity as God may be better served, we obeyed, and this our realm not burthened with charges as of late years it hath been, wherein assure yourself you shall not lack any good countenance and favour in such measure as neither any . . . . practice shall be able to prevail against, and therefore upon this assurance you may proceed with the more comfort in the charge committed unto you. In this late enterprise performed by you so greatly to our liking, we could have wished that the principal persons of the said invaders to whom you have promised grace, which we will see performed, had been reserved for us to have executed towards them either justice or mercy as to us should have been found best, for so it seemeth to us most agreeable to reason that a principal should receive punishment before an accessary, which would have served for a terror to such as may be hereafter . . . . to be executioners of so wicked an enterprise,

when they heard here, that as well the heads as inferiors had received punishment according to their demerits.

Upon the great good report you have given unto us of such captains and soldiers as in this enterprise did assist you, for their great forwardness and courage in performing this so acceptable a service to us, we would have you let them understand in how thankful part we accept the same; and so much the rather for that we have been informed what great penury they have sustained in our service there, not only for want of necessary victual, but also in regard of the badness and unseasonableness of such scarcity as they had; wherein as we to our great grief, holding nothing so . . . . . as the preservation of the health and lives of the soldiers, think ourselves very ill-served by such officers to whom the care thereof hath been committed, so you will let them understand that we will see better order taken hereafter, as well in that as in all things requisite for their better comfort and encouragement, and for the advancement of our service."*

On the top of the above letter, drawn up of course by her ministers, and copied by a secretary, Elizabeth, we are informed by Walsingham, wrote what follows in a fine Roman hand. It is worthy of note that her

* Elizabeth to Grey, December 12th, 1580, 'Irish Papers.' State Paper Office.

language, generally vigorous and perspicuous, becomes, when she talks of sentiment or love, so involved and mystical that it is scarcely practicable to follow the course of her ideas. To Grey she says, "The mightiest hand of the Almightiest Power hath showed manifest the force of his strength in the weakness of feeblest hope; and mind this, you live to make men ashamed, ever hereafter to disdain. . . . . In which action I say you have been chosen the lieutenant of His glory with us to give you no cause to——" Abruptly broken off.

CHAPTER V.

CLOSE OF HIS IRISH CAMPAIGN.

UNTROUBLED apparently by the least remorse for the terrible part he had played at Del Oro, Raleigh returned to his old quarters in Cork, while the Lord-deputy proceeded to Dublin, to make preparations for dealing with the rebels, who in number and daring were growing every day more formidable. Scarcely can a doubt be entertained that, through the instrumentality of the priesthood, Rome and Spain held continual communication with the Irish nobles, whose hopes were kindled by the knowledge imparted to them of Philip's ultimate designs. To fill up the chasm between the present and the future it was their policy to skirmish with events, to pursue a dubious course by professing loyalty while secretly stimulating rebellion, and, by multiplying the scenes of action, to necessitate the dispersion and consequently the weakness of the English forces. The task of checking these movements had devolved on Ormond,

who had been reinstated in the unenviable position of general and governor in Munster. Under his command Raleigh served, though his military genius and political sagacity, aided by experience, led him to form a low estimate of the Earl's abilities.

With the germs of numerous plans in his mind, Raleigh, in the dead of winter, set out for Dublin, in the hope of prevailing on the Lord-deputy to adopt his scheme for trampling out the insurrection, while persevering in that course of rigid economy insisted on by Elizabeth and her ministers. Though he had already begun to be viewed in an unfavourable light by Grey, he obtained an audience, and was permitted to set forth his ideas. The result showed one of two things: first, that the Lord-deputy laid no great stress on his suggestions; or, secondly, that he was led through petty jealousy to deny him the means of developing them on a scale which would command the attention of the Home Government. Accordingly he sent back the energetic young officer with a large field of duty mapped out for him, but a very small increase of means for filling it up. Raleigh was instructed by the Lord-deputy to watch over the movements of the Barrys, to seize on Barry Court and its demesnes, and to adopt such other measures as he might deem necessary for restoring or preserving the peace of the country. But to show him perhaps how completely he adopted his ideas of economy, Grey met

his demands for additional means by granting him a body of four infantry and three horse to escort him back to his quarters. On account of the difficult nature of the country, an Irish peasant was added to serve as guide; and at the head of this force Raleigh left Dublin to fight his way back through an enemy's country. The Ireland of those days resembled the inland portions of Australia or the backwoods of America, save that here and there the ruins of some ancient church, monastery, or feudal castle, spoke of former attempts at civilization.

To despise a foe is never safe, as Raleigh on this homeward journey learned by experience. By acts of severity or ferocity he had caused the Catholics to regard him with hatred; and, well aware of his movements, they deputed Fitz-Edmunds, seneschal of Imokelly, to be the exponent of their feelings. Raleigh had already passed Youghal, and was approaching the Blackwater, when he touched the meshes of the ambush laid for him. Habitual triumph over danger had made him reckless: like a knight of romance he pricked across the plain, meditating probably on the grand schemes he had formed for the total reduction of the island, when Fitz-Edmunds, emerging from the woods at the head of numerous followers, caught sight of and dashed forwards to intercept him.

Raleigh with no less speed made for the ford: it was

a trial of horsemanship—down the slope with whoop and yell came the Celts—on, on spurred the colossal Saxon—the river before him, the foe behind—his horse was fleet; he gained the river's bank, plunged into the stream, and soon stood on the other side, pistol in hand. His followers, thoroughly awakened to the peril of loitering, now pressed forward in all haste; Henry Moyle, a trooper, first; then Raleigh's servant, Jenkins, with two hundred pounds in his saddle-bags; with the rest of the retinue pell-mell at their heels. In the middle of the stream Moyle's horse stumbled and threw his rider, who, shouting for aid, brought Raleigh to his relief.* In their haste, however, they managed matters clumsily, for Moyle was no sooner remounted than he fell again; his horse taking fright, rushed off, and was captured by the enemy. Still Fitz-Edmunds and his galloglasses, lothe to engage in a hand-to-hand encounter, kept aloof till the English had passed the ford. They however made a show of keeping up the pursuit, though at a respectful distance, till Raleigh and his men, spurring across the plain, reached a ruined castle, in which they could have defended themselves against much greater odds. Upon this Fitz-Edmunds with his followers stopped short, and soon disappeared among the woods.

Not long after reaching Cork, Raleigh wrote an

* Hooker, p. 441.

account of the state of things to the Lord-deputy, from which Shakespeare might have taken his description of Falstaff's ragged regiment. "There is great need," he says, "of a supply in Munster, for the bands are all much decayed. The bands G. and . . . . were so ordered in the raising that no man was the better; for the officers had the furniture, and the soldiers ran away; the men are such froward miserable creatures as the captains dare not lead them to serve: if your honour had beheld them when they arrived here you would think them far unfit to fight for her majesty's crown. An like your honour there is no fit place to land them that their captains may receive them furnished but Cork, from whence they may most conveniently be delivered over."*

The object of Raleigh's absence being divined by the rebels, Lord Barry's castle of Barry Court was delivered to the flames, and the lands devastated, in order that the English might derive no benefit from their occupation. Lord Barry himself being then a prisoner in Dublin Castle, his son David exercised authority in his name, dismantling strongholds and raising troops. When called upon by Ormond to explain his conduct, he, like the Earl of Essex twenty years later, pretended to fear that Raleigh would take his life, since, together with

* Raleigh to the Lord-deputy, February 23rd, 1581 'Irish Papers.' State Paper Office.

Sir Warham St. Leger, he had obtained from the Lord-deputy authority to do with him and his estates what he listed.* From an incident belonging to this part of Raleigh's story, we perceive that the spirit of knight-errantry was not yet extinct. At a parley between the Lord Governor and the rebels, Raleigh observing Fitz-Edmunds among them, taunted him for his cowardice, since at the ford, when the Irish were to the English as twenty to one, he declined coming to close quarters; to this the seneschal made no reply, but one of his followers answered that though his master had been on that day wanting in courage, nothing of the kind would ever happen again. Ormond, overhearing what was said, proposed to the seneschal a combat of two, four, or six, against as many Irish, if they desired to give proof of their valour. I will come, he said, with Walter Raleigh and four others, we will cross the great river and there encounter as many of you rebels, and try on which side the superiority of valour lies. The challenge, however, was not accepted.

But though Raleigh and Ormond were for a while on friendly terms, dissensions gradually arose between them. Men in office, especially in distant provinces, commonly satisfy themselves with doing as little as

* Ormond to the Lord-deputy, March 13th, 'Irish Papers.' This letter is signed *copia vera*, with the name of Edmund Spenser.

possible for the public service, and view with dislike all who urge them to perform more. Raleigh, whose energy was indefatigable, beheld with impatience the listlessness of Ormond, and complained of it to the Lord-deputy, which led to the removal of the earl from his command; yet the tone of his suggestions is so proud, peremptory, and masterful, that it appears to have inspired Grey with jealousy.

Whatever others might do, the centurion of Cork allowed himself no respite from labour and study. He desired to put an end to the rebellion, and re-establish Elizabeth's authority from Cape Clear to the Giant's Causeway. In consequence of this irrepressible energy, and the genius that guided it, he became, in the opinion of the Lord-deputy's own secretary, better qualified than any other man living to quench the fires of insurrection, and wisely to govern Ireland. He understood the causes that gave perennial life to rebellion, and made civil war the inheritance of every successive Lord-deputy.

He had yet the simplicity to imagine he should earn favour with his superiors by imparting to them his bold and perspicuous ideas, though he speedily made the discovery that to rise above them in generalship or policy was only to provoke their hatred. He offended Ormond by proving himself abler than he; he incurred the persevering enmity of Grey by communicat-

ing to the Queen a plan for the government of Munster at once effective and economical.

On the 1st of May, 1581, Raleigh forwarded to the already irritated Lord-deputy his opinion on the state of affairs in Munster in a letter, the style of which is that of equal writing to equal, not that of a captain addressing his general:—

"Fearing that it should seem strange unto your lordship the little service done in these parts, I presume to write unto your honour in my own excuse, lest your lordship should grow in ill opinion of us that are and have been continually lying in the presence of the enemy to be directed. The bands of Sir George Bourchier, Edward Barkley, Captain Dowdall, and of myself, have ever been since the second week of Lent, remaining in Cork, and both the great wood of Conolagh, Harlo Clenlis, and all the county of Limerick, and counties between the Dingle and Kilkenny, left without any companies, either to defend itself or annoy the enemy; since which time we have made two journeys, the one towards Kilkenny to give convoy to my lord and attend his return, and the other into Conolagh, by which journeys, the one being in horrible weather, and the other utterly bootless, being done without draught or espial; and besides being enforced to walk such unreasonable marches, where we despatched a churl of the traitors, we lamed, lost, or

left behind a soldier unserviceable with two of our men.

"The poor bands have cursed the change they made in leaving to follow your honour, as they have told the Lord-general many times; and this 1st of May we are going another posting convoy towards Kilkenny; but to colour the matter we shall march some two days out of our way to seek we know not whom. The store of Cork, except it be a small quantity of wheat and butter, is all spent within the walls; and now it will be alleged we cannot serve for want of victuals, or else because the bands are not supplied; although we were never less than four hundred strong; and yet Sir George Bourchier's and Captain Barkley's left at Kill-mallock and Askyton. We have spent these two months of the spring in parleys with David Barry, Barry Roe, the Countess of Desmond, and Finnan McCarthy; and we think it will be two months more ere he will be resolved whether these ought to be followed or no—and yet there is no day passeth without some traitorous villanies by the Barrys committed. The Countess of Desmond is returned, and brought so many followers with her hither to carry provision with her as the earl for his part shall be better able to keep the field all this summer, and at her going away, none of her train either searched or looked over.

Barry Roe is . . . . . the Lady Barry having

gathered her goods into Cork, and fearing that by the attainder of her husband these will be found for the Queen. Her young son (Barry Roe), that five days before fell on the garrison of Youghal, is brought in to serve that town, to carry the goods into O'Sullivan's country or elsewhere for the more safety, and besides this man shall keep some store of cattle and such impotent people as cannot follow Davey Barry into the field, with many other—either for the Queen or for the laws * * * * * * * * * *

Barry Court and the island which your honour willed me to keep, hath since been many times defaced and the other spoiled and preyed. From this island the traitors can never want neither wine, nor salt, iron, nor any other necessary provision, nor if need be, advertisement from Spain or elsewhere, being common for any man to land on. Notwithstanding it is left naked, and the castle broken that stood at the entrance thereof, I will at my own cost build it up again, and defend it for her majesty. I would rather be an humble and earnest suitor to your honour for it, in that I hear the Lord-general purposeth, when I have taken the toil in making it defensible and been at the charge, to turn me over for my charges to the Queen, and dispose of the island to some other. I hope your honour will stand my good lord therein. If it please your honour to give me commission, there may be another hundred

soldiers laid upon the country hereabout. I hope it will be a most honourable matter for your lordship, most acceptable to her majesty, and profitable to the country, and the right means to banish all idle and fruitless galloglasses and kerns, the ministers of all mischiefs. Thus most humbly beseeching your honour not to condemn any of us that are willing to deserve your honour's favour, I humbly take my leave."*

The Lord-deputy, thoroughly tired of his office, had already, in the spring of 1581, begun to press for his recal. The pay of his army was so far in arrears, that when in the course of the summer a considerable sum was remitted to him, it barely sufficed to allow the soldiers two shillings in the pound. Secretly the Home Government, like the first Napoleon, meant to quarter the troops upon the country, a system which—soldiers being neither provident nor economical—soon exhausted the resources of Ireland; after which the army had frequently no other subsistence than the flesh of dead horses, cows, sheep, and other loathsome offal.† Mercy to the natives under such circumstances was hardly to be looked for.

Having received Raleigh's letter, Grey, on the 14th of May, repeated to Walsingham his desire to be relieved from what he deemed an intolerable burden. Means had been suggested for defraying the expense of

* Cork, May 1st, 1581. † Murdin, pp. 348, 361.

two thousand men, and the secretary might perceive, he said, by Mr. Raleigh's letter, that others could discover no impossibility in it. To persons so sanguine he was willing to relinquish the honour of carrying out their own designs, while he, in a tone of pique and sarcasm, begs Elizabeth to set him at liberty. "By your letters," he observes to Walsingham, "I perceive the hardness and in a manner resolution of her majesty to leave this country to tumble into the sway of their own sensual government. Well, God send her majesty the quiet good and honour of it she expects; for mine own part, if regard of God and her majesty moved me not, I, as any other governor, might be glad of it, that course no doubt being to lay the easiest and gainfulest trade for him that shall carry the office; but confessing that my conscience may not be persuaded to be an instrument to such a purpose, good sir, afford the uttermost of your wonted favour in getting me discharged; that shall be, to me, not a pain, but performance of your faithful friendship andgood-will.*

Some of Raleigh's services while at Cork were extremely unpleasant. Nearly all the Irish nobles were suspected of holding communication with the rebels; thus the Earl of Kildare, and his son the Baron of Ophalia, being accused of treason, though, as far as can

* Grey to Walsingham. Dublin, May 14th, 1581. MS. 'Irish Papers.'

be discovered, without the least truth, were sent over to England and lodged in the Tower, where, after a long captivity, the father died. In like manner the Lord Roche was now assailed by evil reports, for which reason Ormond commissioned Raleigh, whom he evidently regarded as the most daring officer under his command, to proceed with his company to Bally-in-Harsh, where Roche had a castle, and there to seize and bring him and his wife prisoners to Cork.

Between the issuing of the order and its execution no delay was enterposed. On the same night, at the head of ninety men, ten of whom were cavalry, Raleigh set out, about eleven o'clock, and pushing forward in the dark, through miry roads beset with enemies, presented himself early in the morning before the castle gate, close to which lay a town inhabited by Lord Roche's retainers, who prepared to defend their chief. Seeing them come forth to the number of about five hundred, Raleigh ordered his men to keep the townspeople in check, and accompanied by his lieutenant, Butler, with some other officers, knocked loudly at the castle gate. They were presently answered from within by some of Lord Roche's gentlemen, who on hearing that the captain desired to speak with their lord, said he might enter if accompanied only by two of his followers. Raleigh insisted on the admission of all those that were with him, and the soldiers approaching from the

town during the parley, contrived, a few at a time, to insinuate themselves into the court, and then closing the iron gates, the castle with all its inmates was at their mercy.

Lord Roche had now no choice but to receive the English officers, whom he invited to dinner. Raleigh then explained the object of his visit, and showed the commission by which he was ordered to take his lordship and his lady prisoners, and conduct them into the presence of the Earl of Ormond, at Cork.

To this Lord Roche, relying probably on the number of his retainers, replied that he neither could nor would obey the orders of Ormond; but upon Raleigh's observing that if his lordship refused to go peaceably he must take him by force, he understood the impolicy of resistance, and consented to depart. At Raleigh's suggestion his lordship ordered the townspeople to form themselves into a guard to protect his departure, and saying that he was in a condition to clear himself, Roche set out cheerfully with his captors.

Having received intelligence that Barry and Fitz-Edmunds, with about seven or eight hundred men, lay in ambush on the road to Cork, Raleigh again chose the night for his march. The distance was small, not exceeding twenty miles, but the ways being miry, broken, beset with rocks, and full of sloughs and pitfalls, it was difficult to advance in the pitchy

darkness. The weather was, besides, tempestuous, and the cold severe; but nothing could dismay Raleigh or his men, who marched ready at any moment for battle, and partly through skill, partly through good fortune, eluded the vigilance of the rebel force, and reached Cork without losing a man. The captive nobleman, whether innocent or guilty, contrived to make out a good case, and there is reason to believe he had been calumniated, since he ever afterwards clung to the English party, and lost three of his sons in its cause.*

When in the summer of 1581 the Earl of Ormond ceased to be general in Munster, the government of the province was intrusted to Sir William Morgan, Walter Raleigh, and Captain Piers, till Zouch, the new governor, should arrive. These officers lived in camp at Lismore, on the Blackwater, whence, on the 25th of August, Raleigh wrote to his friend and early patron Leicester, complaining of his wretched position in Ireland. "I have spent some time here under the deputy," he says, "in such poor place and charge as were it not for that I know him to be as if yours, I would disdain it as much as to keep sheep. I will not trouble your honour with the business of this lost land, for that Sir Warham St. Leger can best, of any man, deliver unto your lordship the good, the bad, the

* Hooker, p. 444.

mischiefs, the means to amend, and all in all of this common wealth, or rather common woe."*

While proceeding, in September, from Lismore to Cork, preparatory to quitting Ireland, Raleigh became entangled in an adventure which nearly put a period to his career. He might well speak of the country as a lost land, since nothing went on there as in other parts of the world. Rebellion did not signify a simultaneous rising of the people, the organizing of large bodies, an army, a camp, a common treasury, a general leading his followers to victory or defeat—but an endless series of ambushes, murders, forays, revenges, with no other result than to render a settled government impossible.

Having spent the summer in scouring the woods and fastnesses in Waterford, Cork, and Tipperary, Raleigh left Lismore, and at the head of eight horse and eighty foot, took the road to Cork. Though warned that Barry, with several hundred men, had taken post on his line of march, contempt for the enemy led him to attach no importance to the intelligence.

In fact when he approached this rabble of kerns and galloglasses, they fled and dispersed, which, inspiring him with still greater contempt, he rode like a knight-errant across the plain, followed by six horsemen, considerably in advance of his infantry. Observing a number of Irish making towards a wood, he galloped

* Wright, 'Elizabeth, and her Times,' ii., 149.

forwards to intercept them, upon which they faced about, and made a rush at their assailants. A hand-to-hand contest ensued, the kerns with their skenes and pikes killed several horses, and mortally wounded Raleigh's own steed, which plunged so violently in the agonies of death that he was in danger of being run through with a pike before he could disengage himself from the stirrups. He owed his life to the courage and fidelity of his servant, Nicholas Wright, a Yorkshireman, who, shouting to the English soldiers to rescue their captain, charged the enemy; at the same moment FitzRichard and a friendly kern disentangled Raleigh from his dying horse. At his captain's call Wright ceased from pursuing the Irish to defend FitzRichard: there was a melée, English, kerns, gallo-glasses, thrusting, cutting, without order; but at length the rebels fled, several of their number having been slain or taken prisoners.

With this adventure terminated Raleigh's personal services in Ireland, which in the month of December he left as the bearer of despatches from his cousin Colonel John Zouch, Governor of Munster to Lord Burleigh. *

The handsome soldier no sooner appeared at court,

* Zouch's Despatches are dated December 4th, 1581, and he observes that the bearer will explain to his lordship "the manner of his taking upon him the government of Munster." State Paper Office.

where he had numerous relatives and friends, than he became the favourite of Elizabeth, who doubtless regretted he had been suffered to remain absent so long. His manner, we are told, was always winning—his speech eloquent, and the tone of his conversation at once peremptory and pursuasive. At the age of twenty-nine, therefore, he began to be regarded with high favour and indulgence by his sovereign of forty-eight. He described to her the wars of Ireland, gave her frankly his opinion of Ormond and Grey, and delivered to her in writing a "plot," as it was then called, for the better government of Munster, for the disciplining and disposal of the garrisons, for repressing rebellion, and effecting a large saving for the treasury. This was attacking Elizabeth on her weak side, especially when the cause of economy was advocated by so magnificent a pleader. When the aspiring captain sailed from Cork, Grey probably hoped he had not only seen the last of him, but experienced the last of his influence. He was mistaken. The sceptre of thought which Raleigh wielded could throw its long shadow from Nonsuch to Dublin, and startle the Lord-deputy in his castle there. It appears to have been with dismay that Grey heard of Raleigh's plan for the better government of Munster, at which his fiery temper boiled over in the following fierce letter to the Earl of Leicester:—

"Having lately received advertisement of a plot delivered by Captain Raleigh unto her majesty for the lessening of her charges here in the province of Munster, and disposing of the garrison according to the same—the matter at the first, indeed, offering a very plausible show of thrift and consideration, might easily occasion her majesty to think that I have not so carefully as behoved looked into the state of that cause and the search of her majesty's profit. Wherefore having with some of the best advised of the council here enclosed with consideration thereof, and perceiving many inconveniences with some impossibilities in the account, we have (as by our general letters to her majesty herewith you may perceive) laid down our judgment and opinion thereof, which when it shall come unto your lordship's deeper consultations, I doubt not but you will soon discern a difference between the judgment of those who with grounded experience and approved reason look into the condition of things, and those who upon no ground but seeming fancies and effecting credit with benefit, frame plots upon impossibilities for others to execute; and so, trusting that your lordship with the rest will esteem of both for the rest, I will refer you to those reasons which we have in our said letter laid before her majesty. Furthermore, I have to complain unto your lordship, whose only redress I look for in these matters, of the great

slackness and default of Bland, the garrison of Munster utterly starved by him, &c.

P.S. It hath pleased God to give the Lord Zouch the killing of the Lord of Desmond, that arch rebel and traitor. I heard of it three days past, but this night I received the perfect confirmation thereof, and with him hath he taken another notorious knave, called James FitzJohn of Strangallie. The news I trust will not dislike your lordship, as well in the private behalf of your poor kinsman's good hap as of the common good, neither will your lordship, I hope, spare to advance the due commendations of the endeavour to her majesty."*

It was not long before Lord-deputy Grey made the discovery of how formidable a rival he now had in the Queen's favour. Leicester indeed was his kinsman —but Leicester's own statue often rocked on its pedestal when touched by the finger of Raleigh, to whom not many years later he chiefly owed his reinstatement in Elizabeth's favour. On the 2nd of April Walsingham forwarded a despatch to Grey, in which reference was made to the Queen's letter of the day before. What his feelings were on the receipt of it we may conjecture from the language in which he professes obedience to her majesty's commands, which he affects not to have received in her own words. When, how-

* 'Irish Papers.'

ever, he read and reflected on her language, he must clearly have understood both Raleigh's position and his own.

"Right-trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well. Whereas we be given to understand that Captain Appesley is not long since deceased, and the band of footmen which he had committed to James Fenton, for that as we are informed the said Fenton hath otherwise an entertainment by a certain ward under his charge; but chiefly for that our pleasure is to have our servant, Walter Raleigh, trained some longer time in that our realm for his better experience in martial affairs, and for the special care we have to do him good, in respect of his kindred that have served us, some of them as you know near about our person. These are to require you that the leading of the said band may be committed to the said Raleigh, and for that he is for so many considerations by us licensed to stay here, our pleasure is that the said band shall be in the meantime, till he repair unto that our realm, delivered to so many officers, as he shall (appoint) to be his lieutenants, there *with charge* that they *yield to him* and his lieutenants, *like quiet obedience as they did to Appesley*, which shall be our good intention. Given at our Manor of Greenwich, the — day of April, 1582, in the twenty-fourth year of our reign.*

* 'Irish Papers.'

It could scarcely be expected that Grey would allow such an occasion to pass without giving vent to the feelings he cherished towards Raleigh. Allowing himself several weeks to cool, reflection and leisure could yet not restrain him within the bounds of moderation, though he well knew that what he wrote Elizabeth would read. "As to Captain Raleigh's assignment to charge of Appesley's band, which in your letter of the 2nd of April you write to be signified unto me by a letter from her majesty, I have no letter that specified any such thing to me, and for mine own part I must be plain,—I neither like his carriage nor his company, and therefore other than by direction and commandment, and what his right require, he is not to expect from my hands."*

After this we experience no surprise that in three months from the date of this communication Grey had ceased to be Lord-deputy of Ireland.

* Grey to Walsingham, 'Irish Papers.'

CHAPTER VI.

IMMERSED IN COURT INTRIGUES.

RALEIGH found the court in a state of extraordinary excitement, caused by the arrival of the Duc d'Anjou, formerly Alençon, who hoped to win a crown by taking to wife a lady old enough to be his mother. Whether or not Elizabeth desired to take a husband at all may be matter of doubt, but whatever her wishes may have been, her reason soon became convinced, that an union with him, whom Sidney in his rough language calls "the son of the Jezebel of the age,"* was a step too hazardous to be ventured upon.

Leicester, who understood both his mistress and the nation, was far too subtle a politician to be defeated by a stripling as hideous in mind and manners as he was in person. It seems probable that he had in reality no obstacles to surmount, and that it was agreed between him and the Queen that the French court should be

* Letter to the Queen. 'Sidney State Papers.'

soothed, and public opinion on the Continent conciliated by putting on the appearance of yielding only to necessity in rejecting the last matrimonial offers that could be made by one of Catherine de Medici's sons. We have seen, and shall see again, how skilfully Elizabeth could play the actress, and therefore need attach little importance to her dramatic flirtations with Anjou, to the incident of the ring, to her deep sighs, to her crocodile tears, or to any of those other external manifestations of passion which she could put on or off as easily as her glove. Besides, with the magnificent Leicester, the gentle Hatton, and the gallant and handsome Raleigh at her side, is it to be credited that she could have cherished for one moment the project of linking herself to a creature as frightful as the "Devil's dam?"

After tolerating three months of amorous fooling, Leicester dismissed his would-be rival; and to soften his discomfiture, consented to escort him out of the land, accompanied by a brilliant retinue, among whom were Raleigh and Sidney.* It was Elizabeth's intention, we are told, to proceed as far as Dover, but the plague breaking out in that place,† she stopped short at Canterbury. To Raleigh the Queen now deigned to show especial favour, by intrusting him with a secret mission

* 'Sidney State Papers.' Mr. Lloyd, 'Life of Sir Philip Sidney, p. 136.

† Lord Charles Howard to Walsingham, February 4th, 1582. State Paper Office.

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to the Prince of Orange, which, when the other noblemen and gentlemen should return, would detain him for a while in the Low Countries.

In spite of my general view of this transaction, I confess that some circumstances connected with it seem to be at variance with my interpretation of Elizabeth's conduct. On Sunday, February 11th, three days after the duke's departure, Burleigh wrote a long letter to Walsingham, concluding with an exceedingly curious paragraph:—"Marchmont," he says, "is come to this town, and desireth to speak to me, which I think must be for money, I pray you know her majesty's. mind herein . . . . of late his lodgings in Cannon Row was robbed, and in a trunk his writing was also embezzled, and the trunk conveyed into a garden, when the persons that found it brought to me the very indented papers, written betwixt de Bex and you, written in your name, the discovery whereof made me ready to blush to see by that accident such profligacy. . . . As I can guess wickedness in that house bred the theft, as the like did to Combelles by that infamous strumpet, Lady Hilton."* As Anjou appears to have been always in want of money, he had probably extorted from Elizabeth a promise to replenish his empty purse, and left behind Monsieur de Bex, his ordinary gentleman of the chamber, to transact

* Burleigh to Walsingham, February 11th, 1582. State Paper Office.

the business with Walsingham. The negotiation was successful, for in an exchequer account dated 24th of March following, we find the same de Bex bearing an order to the secretary for fifteen thousand pounds in gold to be conveyed to France, and there laid out in her majesty's service: this enormous sum, equal to seventy-five thousand pounds of our day, was no doubt meant for the use of Elizabeth's unsuccessful suitor.

By the end of March, Raleigh had completed his business in the Netherlands, and returned, bearing letters from the Prince of Orange to Elizabeth. Surrounded by his kinsfolk, who formed no small portion of the court, he thenceforward devoted himself to the Queen, whose favour he had already won. His conversation, all writers agree, was brilliant and fascinating, though tradition ascribes to him an awfulness of aspect which daunted ordinary listeners.* His mistress, however, was charmed by it, as well as by the splendour of his person and manners, and laid so much stress upon his counsel that she was accused of regarding him as an oracle.† From the tone of his mind, from the topics on which he loved to think and write, from his proficiency in literature, above all in poetry—which it is well known Elizabeth loved—from his experience in peace and war, still more from his fiery temperament and ardent

* Aubrey, 'Lives of Eminent Men,' ii., 509.

† Fragmenta Regalia.

passion for adventure, his eloquence, we may be sure, ranged freely over all those subjects which were most adapted to kindle her imagination. When opportunity offered he could likewise say soft things as well as Oxford or Hatton—and to subdue a fierce and awful nature into softness is a triumph in which women always delight. Elizabeth, accordingly, appears to have been more flattered by Raleigh's adoration than by that of any other among her lovers. Scandal immediately became busy with their connection and caused it to be whispered throughout Europe, especially at the courts favourable to Mary Stuart, that the man whose hands had been made red with blood at Del Oro had now become Elizabeth's minion,* and decked with silk, gold, and jewels, flitted like an Adonis about her person.

Leicester had long reached that philosophic state in which, provided he preserved his political ascendancy, he could easily tolerate the multiplication of partners in Elizabeth's affection. He had her cousin at Kenilworth; he had young and lovely mistresses at court; he could afford, therefore, to behold his youthful protégé, Raleigh, dislodging Hatton from his position, and receiving some drops of that love-shower of manors, castles, and estates which she rained so lavishly upon her favourites. Cicero,

* Morgan to Mary Stuart from the Bastile, March 31st, 1586. State Paper Office.

describing his contemporaries, says of one of them, that he rendered himself exceedingly unpopular by his inability to tolerate the ignorance of those around him. It was much the same with Raleigh, whose scoffs and sarcasms were as keen as his sword.

I have already said that Elizabeth's love for Hatton had now, in 1582, lost all the fervour of passion, though she still retained for him an affectionate and generous friendship; but he who seems never to have cared much for any one else, could not be satisfied with so altered a sentiment. Cynics might pretend that he only longed for the good things which her love had formerly lavished on him; but this was not the case. He grieved to see that while her bounty towards him knew no stint, either in opulence or honours, she evidently gave up herself to his rival. This wrung his heart, this poisoned his extraordinary worldly success, and this incessantly corroding his sensitive nature—laid him, before he had passed the noon of life, in his remote grave at Holdenby. At the time of which I am speaking, however, he took what steps he could to bring back the Queen's capricious preference. Elizabeth had passed with her new favourite into the familiarity of using the Christian name, which she condescended to pronounce playfully without the L, saying to him, "Come here!" or, "Go there, Water!" Hatton, whom the same lips had formerly sported with, as "Lids," "Belwether," or

"Pecora Campi," well understood the import of this free-and-easy way of speaking to a man: and in the hope of regaining his old influence, repeated the experiment, the danger of which Sir Edward Dyer* had long ago pointed out to him.

Many critics of our day are fond of searching among Elizabeth's courtiers for the prototypes of Shakespeare's remarkable characters. Essex being Hamlet, Southampton Horatio, and so on. By the same rule Sir Thomas Heneage must surely be Polonius. It was through this solemn personage, upon whose gratitude for numerous favours conferred Hatton rightly counted, that the assault on the Queen's tenderness was to be made. Desirous of symbolizing the apprehensions with which the humid element inspired him, the ex-favourite chose three things to intimate the nature of his fears. The most obvious of course was a letter in which he could explain himself without symbols, but she might refuse to read it. In that case her imagination was to be addressed by the present of a bucket which would suggest how anxious he was to provide against the danger with which he was threatened by "Water." Last came a bodkin, a thing of more uses than one, for while it might be employed to keep a woman's tresses from falling into disorder, it might also, in the hands of despair, give a deserted lover his quietus.

* Nicholas, 'Introduction to Davison's Rhapsody,' i., 73.

Some such nonsensical meaning as this was, I fancy, intended to be conveyed by the missive and symbols confided to the hands of Sir Thomas Heneage. Faithful to his trust, the go-between watched for the auspicious moment when Raleigh should be out of the way; but so assiduous was his attendance upon Elizabeth, so mindful of the necessity of warding off all sinister influences that Polonius' ingenuity was sorely put to the test. The way in which the business was at length managed he shall be allowed to explain in his own words: "I received your letters," he says, "with your token to her majesty before ten of the clock this morning, which I carried up immediately to her highness, then ready to ride abroad to kill a doe in the parrock of the Great Park; and desiring to furnish her majesty with the bucket, because I thought, as it happened, Water should be so nigh her as soon as she came out of her drawing-chamber, I presented her withal, together with the letter you wrote, which she took in her hand, and smiling, said, 'There was never such another,' and seeking to put the bodkin in her head, where it could not well abide, she gave it me again, and the letter withal; which when she came into the standing in the parrock, she took of me and read and with blushing cheeks uttered many speeches (which I refer till I see you) the most of them tending to the discovery of a doubtful mind, whether she should be

angry or well-pleased: in the end showing, upon conference, her settled opinion of the fidelity and fastness of your affection, and her determination ever to give you good cause nothing to doubt her favour." *

Lovers usually invent for themselves a language and expressive symbols, the subtle meaning of which they at least hope no one else will discover. This was pre-eminently the case with Elizabeth and Hatton; they talked in hieroglyphics, but so little able were they to conceal what lay beneath the surface that the least Machiavelian of courtiers could hardly fail to detect their drift. When Hatton selected from the treasures of Egyptian lore the triangle as his cypher, Elizabeth could not have felt otherwise than flattered by the adoration of the sex which it implied. Sometimes words with a double meaning familiarly known to both were employed, and according to the accident of time, either suggested ideas of impassioned delight or of cold and vapid reminiscence. Though Elizabeth blushed—as no doubt she well might—at the circumstances which Hatton brought to her recollection, she was not unwilling that, while Raleigh possessed the substance, Hatton should still be indulged with Ixion's part.

Heneage, in spite of his anxiety to be exact, may possibly have remembered Elizabeth's words imperfectly, or else she was thrown into such a flutter by the

* Nicholas, 'Life of Hatton,' p. 275.

presence of one lover, and the remembrance of another, that her language fell disjointed from her lips. "That which I was willed to write unto you is this, that she liked your preamble so ill as she had little list to look on the bucket or the book; and that if princes were like Gods, as they should be, they would suffer no element so to abound as to breed confusion; and that Pecora Campi was so dear unto her that she *had bounded her banks so sure* as no water or floods could be able ever to overthrow them. And for better assurance unto you that you should fear no evil, she hath sent you a bird, that together with the rainbow brought the good tidings and the covenant that there should be no more destruction by water."*

These deceitful assurances brought but little comfort to the unhappy Sir Christopher, whose absence from court became more and more frequent, because when he went thither he witnessed little but new marks of preference for his ambitious rival. His dancing-days were over, though Elizabeth's were not; and he had no projects of conquest, glory, or gain to inflame her imagination or stimulate her cupidity. On the other hand, Raleigh, to whom love was only a pastime, and a mistress a plaything, had a brain which absolutely seethed with vast designs. He saw that England by no means occupied the position which nature meant her to

* Nicholas, 'Life of Hatton,' p. 277.

hold in the political world, and threw forth his thoughts in all directions in order to discover suitable means and an adequate field on which to develop her energies.

Elizabeth's government met with constant checks and impediments through the scantiness of its finances, and it was beyond the competence of the statesmen of the day to supply the deficiency. Raleigh's vigorous and searching mind had made the discovery that an immense revenue could only be obtained through free trade; but as that idea was not likely to meet with much favour from the Lord Treasurer, he had to devise other plans for filling the national coffers. Spain, he knew, imported incalculable treasures from America, where gold, it was believed, sparkled in every stream, and lay in exhaustless abundance in the bowels of every mountain. Thitherward, therefore, should the enterprise of England tend; and at the very moment when his dalliance with the Queen maddened Sir Christopher Hatton, and appeared to absorb his thoughts and exhaust his vigour, his imagination, in truth, was wafting its way across the Atlantic, and planting in the virgin-soil of North America the germs of those mighty colonies whose power and grandeur constitute at this moment the astonishment if not the terror of the world.

An interval of three years from the failure of his first expedition to the West Indies had sufficed to relume

his hopes: Sir Humphrey Gilbert, also, with the buoyant spirit of a true adventurer, was recovering, though slowly, from the blow dealt him by the Spaniards in 1579; and the object of both the half-brothers being the same, they laboured conjointly to interest all around them in their project, the conception of which implied the existence in their minds of ideas far in advance of their age. Gilbert, however, had hitherto profited but little by the knowledge he possessed; for having lost hold of the skirts of Fortune, he went on ever after vainly plunging forward in the hope of grasping them again. Three ships, all that remained of his former fleet, he had lent to the Government, to be employed against the Spaniards on the Irish coast; but the money due to him for these services he found it impossible to obtain from the Lord Treasurer. In the summer of 1582 he repeated to Walsingham his application for payment, and complained that although he had served her majesty from boyhood to the age of white hairs,* the means of performing still more for her and for the country were withheld from him.

But he had now at length got an advocate at court to whose pleading Elizabeth could not refuse to listen. Still though she smiled faintly on the plan for fitting out another expedition, she appears to have contributed but little money, and her example becoming contagious,

* Gilbert to Walsingham, July 11th, 1582. State Paper Office.

Gilbert's design obtained the countenance of very few, though among those few Philip Sidney was one.*

At the outset Raleigh intended to accompany his half-brother; but the Queen, being disinclined to part so soon with her new favourite, overruled his design. She, moreover, entertained an objection to Gilbert's commanding the fleet in person, having observed, as she expressed it, that "he had no good hap at sea:" in what hap consists no philosopher has yet explained, though a large portion of history be only a commentary on the fact, that certain families and individuals, distinguished for great abilities, have yet found their fortunes blossom only to be blighted. In Gilbert's case we need perhaps seek no other explanation than the fact that with slender resources he attempted great undertakings, and could therefore have only hoped for success through the interference of that power which Raleigh denominates "the god of fools." With a nation's revenues at their backs, Raleigh and Gilbert might have turned the stream of human affairs into a new channel, and impressed a different aspect on the history of the world. As it was, the smallness of their means contrasted so strikingly with the vastness of their aim that nothing but respect for their genius can even now protect their enterprises from ridicule.

To form part of Gilbert's fleet, Raleigh built a ship,

* 'Sidney Papers,' i., 298.

and bestowed on it his own name, with which aid Gilbert was constrained to content himself. At length his little fleet, manned, victualled, and ready for sea, was collected on the Devonshire coast, where he received the following letter from Raleigh: "Brother, I have sent you a token from her majesty—an anchor guided by a lady—as you see; and further, her highness willed me to send you word, that she wished you as great good hap and safety to your ship as if herself were there in person, desiring you to have care of yourself as of that which she tendereth, and therefore for her sake you must provide for it accordingly; further, she commandeth that you leave your picture with me. For the rest I leave it to our meeting or to the report of this bearer, who would needs be the messenger of this good news. So I commend you to the will and protection of God, who sends us such life or death as he shall please or hath appointed."

After receiving this ominous letter, Gilbert was detained by contrary winds nearly three months in and about Plymouth Sound; but at length quitted Cawsand Bay in the heart of summer, and sailed forth into the Atlantic.

Into the melancholy history of this voyage it would be beside my purpose to enter at length. Away went the gallant explorer towards the West, and for several months kept moving to and fro over the ocean, his

little fleet now dispersed, now collected, till on the 9th of September, two days after, Elizabeth's birthday, which her seamen always celebrated, he was beheld for the last time reclining on the deck of his vessel,* either reading or consulting some chart. Night then closed in, rough and boisterous, and when the morning of the tenth dawned, Gilbert's ship could nowhere be seen upon the waters. The brave adventurer had perished; the survivors returned to England with the evil tidings, which, instead of disheartening, only the more stimulated Raleigh to pursue and complete the design his brother had formed.

* Captain Edward Hayes, in Hakluyt, iii., 202.

CHAPTER VII.

LAYS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR COLONIAL EMPIRE.

THERE is little difficulty in tracing in outline the course of Raleigh's public services; but when we leave these and attempt to form an idea of his position and proceedings at court, the case is altered. It has been already seen that his rise was as rapid as it was unexpected, and that many among the nobility who wished to occupy the highest places in the Government and about the Queen without doing anything to deserve their honours, and indeed without possessing the ability to do anything, regarded the growth of his influence with malignant envy. It must no doubt have been painful to long-tried statesmen like Burleigh to ask favours of Elizabeth through the intermediation of a young man, who, as they were likely to believe, owed his power to befriend them entirely to his handsome person and winning manners. This opinion, however, of the new favourite, if they ever entertained

it, was speedily destroyed by experience. Instead of displaying, like a Somerset or a Buckingham, the rudeness of an upstart, Raleigh treated his seniors and superiors in office in the most courteous and respectful manner, so that they seem gradually to have lost their repugnance to employ him as their mediator.

The Earl of Oxford, it has been seen, by marrying into Burleigh's family, became to the old man a source of perpetual vexation. Besides indulging in blasphemous and unbecoming language, which oftentimes was carried so far as to revolt the feelings even of men of the world, he drank, gambled, and connected himself with women to be acquainted with whom was itself a disgrace. Though thoroughly irreligious, he seems to have had spasmodic fits of partiality for the old church, and was accordingly suspected, like Arundel and Paget, of conspiring against the interests of Protestantism and the State. Therefore, though his dancing may have inspired Elizabeth with admiration, his general conduct was so little to her liking, that she not only forbade him her presence, but threw him into prison. It is possible that Charles Arundel's accusations, however extravagant, may have been based on truth, especially where they carried with them the keenest sting. Raleigh observes, that if you would thrive at court, you must never venture to tell a great lady, however true it may be, that she is not fair; and

Oxford was accused of having gone much farther in speaking of Elizabeth, who, he affirmed with unpardonable insolence, not only sang and danced, but did everything else with the worst grace that ever woman did.*

How much of this could have been proved Elizabeth probably never paused to inquire, but overwhelmed him at once with her indignation. As father-in-law of the offender, Burleigh naturally espoused his cause, confining his view, however, to certain public brawls and scandals, and overlooking his worst delinquencies. Assuming the influence of Hatton to be still powerful, he besought him to exert it, saying: "These things are hardly carried, and these advantages are easily gotten where *some* may say what they will against my Lord of Oxford and have presence to utter their humours, and my Lord of Oxford is neither heard nor hath presence either to complain or defend himself."†

In the above passage, by *some*, I fancy he means Raleigh, whom Oxford had forced to become his enemy; yet when all other intercessors had failed, it was to this enemy that Burleigh betook himself, entreating him not only to lay his letters before the Queen, but to become at the same time an advocate for his son-in-law

* Particulars, by Arundel, of Oxford's Vices, 1581,—no month. State Paper Office.

† Burleigh to Hatton, March 12th, 1583. Nicholas, p. 322.

To such an appeal Raleigh could not be deaf; and without forgetting the relation in which Oxford had long stood to him, consented to plead his cause. "The evening," he says, "after the receipt of your lordship's letter, I spake with her majesty, and ministering some occasion touching the Earl of Oxford, I told her majesty how grievously your lordship received her late discomfortable answer. Her majesty, as your lordship had written—I know not by whom lately and strangely persuaded—purposed to have new repetition between the Lord Howard, Arundel, and others and the Earl, and said it was a matter not so lightly to be passed over. I answered, that being assured her majesty would never permit anything to be prosecuted to the Earl's danger, if any such possibility were—and therefore it were to small purpose, after so long absence and so many disgraces, to call his honour and name again in question whereby he might appear the less fit either for her favour or presence. In conclusion, her majesty confessed she meant it only thereby to give the Earl warning; and that as it seemed to me being acquainted with his offences, her grace might seem the more in remitting the revenge or punishment of the same. I delivered her your lordship's letter, and what I said further, how honourable and profitable it were for her majesty to have regard of your lordship's health and quiet, I refer to the witness of God and good report

of her highness; and the more to witness how desirous I am of your lordship's favour and good opinion, I am content for your sake to lay the serpent before the fire as much as in me lies, that having recovered strength, myself may be most . . . . . of his poison and sting. For answer her majesty would give me no other, but that she would satisfy your lordship, of whom she ever had and would ever have special care and regard."*

During this period, and for a few years longer, Raleigh enjoyed the advantage of conversing and corresponding familiarly with Leicester and his nephew Sidney, and was consequently looked upon as an outsider by the Cecil faction. By degrees, as their knowledge of the man increased, the leaders of the party slackened in their hostility, though there always remained a grudge at the bottom, which, as we shall see, ripened into full activity when time served.

For one great quality among many others Elizabeth was remarkable—she coveted men's love, but abhorring effeminacy, delighted to behold her lovers distinguish themselves by their achievements. Instead, therefore, of keeping Raleigh dangling perpetually about the court, she sent him down to Devonshire, that by his eloquence, of which she had felt the force, he might

* Raleigh to Burleigh, May 12th, 1583. 'Burleigh Papers.' British Museum.

win for himself a place in the legislature, where he could at the same time earn distinction and promote her interests. He accordingly presented himself to the constituency, and being always popular in the West, was chosen, with Sir William Courtenay, to represent the county in parliament.* All who know anything of Raleigh are aware that he was a practical man, equal to all sorts of business, and so indefatigable in his application, that Cecil, who knew him well, used to say he worked like a horse. The scanty records of the House of Commons in those days do not enable us to form an adequate idea of his performances; we know that he frequently served on committees, and spoke on nearly all great questions that came before the House, especially such as were connected with foreign policy, religious toleration, and social or commercial reform. He was already no mean proficient in political economy, and occasionally opened up long vistas into the dusky recesses of this science, which had then made little progress since the time of Aristotle.

Still the predominant idea in Raleigh's mind was that of founding for England a colonial empire, partly by discovering and peopling unknown lands, but chiefly by wresting America, North and South, from the grasp of Spain. On this subject most of his business dialogues with Sir Humphrey Gilbert may be supposed

* D'Ewes, p. 339.

to have turned; on the same theme he frequently conversed with Sidney, as well as with many others; but his highest ambition was to inflame Elizabeth's imagination by the dazzling prospect of extending her sceptre over America, and drawing thence not only an abundance of gold, but of all such materials of commerce as might be expected to be found in vast regions altogether new.

It has been objected to Raleigh that, like some other adventurers, he looked no further than the acquisition of the precious metals, though such a notion be incompatible with the slightest acquaintance with the history of those times. Raleigh left out of sight scarcely any consideration that could actuate a statesman in coveting foreign possessions. In his addresses and memorials he constantly expatiates not only on the raw materials of opulence, but on the outlet for redundant population, on the expansion and improvement of industry, on the advantages to be derived from a large carrying trade, on the increase of political power, and on the satisfaction of imparting the Christian religion and a more enlightened morality to savage races. These were the topics by which he prevailed upon the Queen, as well as upon parliament, to favour his scheme of colonization, which on March 25th, 1584,* was shown by the famous patent granted him to search out and

* See the Letters Patent in Hakluyt, iii., 297.

take possession of new lands in the western hemisphere.

No sooner had he as lord proprietor obtained authority over the countries that should be explored and annexed to the British crown, than he equipped and sent forth two ships under the command of Philip Amadas,* and Arthur Barlow the historiographer of the voyage, who left the shores of England on the 27th of April.

The predominant idea in the mind of that age was, that Pagans possessed no right to the regions they inhabited, and that it was consequently lawful, religious, and moral to invade their territories, seize upon their estates, reduce them personally to the condition of serfs,

* There is at Simancas an extremely curious document, being the deposition of Richard Butler before the criminal court at Madrid, where he was arraigned as a spy. Having left Ireland at the age of ten, he came to London, and entered as a page into the service of Raleigh, who, when he had reached the age of sixteen, sent him with Captain Amadas to make discoveries in America. His narrative, either through his own errors or those of the transcriber, makes sad havoc with dates, but in other respects seems deserving of credit. That he was, when taken, a spy in Raleigh's service, I make no doubt; and that he could, had he been inclined, have stated many more startling particulars than those which his conscience led him, as he piously affirmed, to disclose to the court, with the fear of the Inquisition before his eyes. His companions in misfortune on this occasion were three young Englishmen, who, in the habit of Franciscan friars, peered about through Philip's dominions for the service of Elizabeth. The rest of their story may still lie hidden in the general archives of Simancas, where possibly it may yet be found: Declaracion que dio Ricardo Butiler, 2 de Mayo, 1593. Simancas.

or rather ignoring their existence altogether, to deal with their possessions as so many desert tracts. This theory originated at Rome, whose popes, with the connivance of all Catholic Europe, arrogated to themselves the power of annulling the laws of nature, and hallowing the worst excesses of crime and cruelty in the appropriation of newly-discovered lands.

In the very word discovery, there lurked a pernicious fallacy; when a country had been peopled and cultivated, it had obviously been discovered by man, though it remained unknown to some sections of the human family, holding opinions and following practices differing from those followed and held by its possessors. According to the eternal laws of right and wrong, the Red Indians, had they arrived in a fleet of canoes on the coast of Spain, France, or England, might with as much justice have called themselves discoverers, and seized upon the estates of Papists and Protestants because they did not stick feathers in their heads, tattoo their bodies, and worship some personifications of the forces of nature, recognized as divinities in America. But might being identified with right, the natives of the whole world, and Raleigh among the rest, were eager to set up the standards of their respective countries in every region where they could, by arms, convert their will into law.

While Raleigh's ships were steering their memorable

course across the Atlantic, which led to the establishment of the Anglo-Saxons in North America and the founding of the United States, the favourite himself was engaged in very different transactions at home. His relatives and connexions were already widely scattered over the south of England and Wales, and through intermarriage were daily extending the network of his kinship and influence. I have more than once alluded to the friendship existing between Raleigh and the most prominent member of the Sidney family, which was now to be cemented by the union of their houses.

Without climbing genealogical trees, I may observe that Sir Philip Champernoun, of Modbury, in Devonshire,* had two daughters, one of whom was married to Raleigh's father, the other to a Mr. Gamage, a man of Norman descent and of large possessions in Glamorganshire. The offspring of this marriage, John Gamage, died young, leaving behind him Barbara, an only daughter, the heiress of all his estates. Barbara, it is said, was still more remarkable for her beauty than for her riches, so that her hand was sought eagerly by numerous suitors, among whom was Philip Sidney's younger brother Robert, in whose behalf Raleigh was induced to interest himself with his cousin. Though a young man, he set about the matter with the coolness

* 'Stradling Correspondence,' pp. 22, 23.

of an octogenarian, and instead of making the least inquiry about the young lady's likings or dislikings, wrote directly to her guardian, Sir Edward Stradling, cautioning him, as he would answer for the same to her majesty, not to afford encouragement to any wooer but one who should be approved of by her nearest kindred.* The gay and handsome Robert Sidney was then proposed as a suitor, whose success, Sir Edward was informed, would give satisfaction to her majesty. Stradling seems to have cherished no dislike to the proposed match, and by way of giving proof of his amity, presented the author of the Arcadia with a fine horse. To render success in negotiation more sure, Walsingham directed the guardian to send up Barbara to London forthwith, that she might be under the eye of her nearest relatives, the Lord Hunsdon and Mr. Raleigh.† By the marriage of his cousin with Robert Sidney, a family-tie was woven between Raleigh and Robert's uncle, the Earl of Leicester, who, while he lived, watched over the young Sidneys with something like the fondness of a parent. It was this same Robert who, after being created Viscount Lisle, succeeded ultimately to the earldom of Leicester. As to Barbara, she became a noted personage in Elizabeth's court, partly for her beauty, but chiefly for the number of pretty children with which she gladdened the heart of her

* 'Stradling Correspondence,' p. 23. † Ibid., p. 29.

lord, and supplied perpetual materials to one of the most pertinacious of court gossips, who devoted a large portion of his life to chronicling her confinements and her christenings.*

The possession by Raleigh of resources equal to the chartering, equipping, and furnishing of two ships, provisioned for a six or eight months' voyage, proves that he had benefited largely by Elizabeth's liberality. Another event which occurred at this time shows that he was diligently taking steps towards anchoring his interests in the soil, so that he might at the same time be deriving revenue from land and deep. Sir Francis Englefield, a Catholic, afterwards attainted, had, apparently with licence, passed into Spain, leaving his estates in England under the management of Lady Englefield. He seems, however, to have been desirous of disposing piecemeal of his lands and manors, either with a view of settling in Spain, or else in order, while he stayed at the court of the Escorial, to make a figure among Philip's nobles.

Raleigh's law-business and financial matters were at that time transacted by Robert Maule, doubtless a solicitor, who learning that one of Englefield's manors, bringing in a hundred a-year, was for sale, sent a man into Spain, by the command or with the authority of his employer, to negotiate for the purchase of the estate.

* Rowland White, 'Sidney Papers,' *passim*.

This agent, named John Frost, who had lived from boyhood in the service of the Englefields, proceeded to Spain, executed his commission, and, returning to England, was immediately after his arrival, in July, apprehended as a popish spy at Plymouth.* Our relations with the Spanish monarchy were then assuming a very peculiar character: preparations for putting the Armada to sea were in full progress; vast galleys and galleons were collected in the harbours of Spain and Portugal, mariners and soldiers were brought together, and though the design of Philip remained unknown, the formidable blow he meditated was generally expected to be struck at England. When any other than merchants, therefore, visited Spain, it was suspected to be for no good, and Frost, supposed to be a Papist, was looked upon as a dangerous person. When brought before the magistrates, however, after an incarceration of some days, the fact came to light that he had passed the seas on business, between Walter Raleigh and Sir Francis Englefield. On being pressed, he said the business respected the purchase of a manor, the name of which he had been commanded to keep secret, and accordingly refused to disclose. All connection between Protestants and refugees, or wandering Catholics, was held to be perilous, so that much importance was attached to the revelation of Frost, who was sent back to gaol in Saltash,

* Frost to Lady Englefield, August 1st, 1584. State Paper Office.

where he was watched day and night by a constable, while a letter was despatched to Raleigh at court, to inquire into the truth or falsehood of the man's statement. The messenger intrusted with this missive loitered so long on the way that the magistrates, Carew and Edgecombe,* Raleigh's own relatives, fearing lest their loyalty should be called in question, wrote to Walsingham, enclosing Frost's examination, and excusing the delay that had taken place through the remissness of the messenger, adding, they doubted not Raleigh was "her majesty's most true and faithful servant." Frost, who acknowledged her majesty's supremacy, and to ward off persecution went to hear prayer and preaching in the Protestant Church, finding his imprisonment likely to be protracted, wrote at length to Lady Englefield, as well as to Robert Maule, through whose interference he was probably set at liberty. Five years later Englefield's estates were confiscated and seized by the crown, when in all likelihood Raleigh obtained a share of them by royal gift.

Synchronous with this transaction a suit was in progress between Lady Gilbert, the widow of Sir Humphrey, and the Lord Treasurer's nephew, Sir Edward Hoby. Walsingham, it appears, took part with the lady, and incensed the Queen against Hoby, who in consequence

* Joint letter to Walsingham, August 3rd, 1584. State Paper Office.

was in disgrace for some years. To the testimony of a man so circumstanced we cannot yield implicit credence, but according to his views Walsingham, who had been the stanch friend of Gilbert, during life preserved the same kindly feeling for his widow, and was indeed so partial that Hoby assured his uncle Burleigh he would rather abide by the judgment of Raleigh, though his adversary's brother's-in-law.* It lessens our esteem for Lady Gilbert to learn that, after the great navigator's death, she entered into second nuptials, in spite of her large family of children, and that, too, with a man who, instead of watching carefully over her possessions, had to be restrained by law from making spoil of them altogether.

We left Amadas and Barlow pursuing, in the spring of this year, their voyage of discovery.† Barlow describes the incidents of the voyage with ability and enthusiasm. They were among the Canary Islands in May, and a month later had reached the West Indies, which they speedily left, with crews already attacked by sickness. Proceeding northwards, along the coasts of Florida and Carolina, they enjoyed, while yet beyond sight of land, "Sabæan odours from the spicy shores," not indeed of Araby the blest, but of a far richer and

* Sir Edward Hoby to Burleigh, November 13th, 1584. State Paper Office.

† Hakluyt, iii., 301.

lovelier land, where the grape in "Bacchanal profusion reels to earth," and cedars loftier than those of Lebanon wave along the breezy heights. Here they first came in contact with the Red Men, among whom they found numerous pretty women and fair children, with auburn and chestnut locks. After a short but friendly intercourse, Raleigh's officers quitted the shores of the New World, and returned in September to England, bringing along with them two natives, and a magnificent pearl, which they presented to the lord-proprietor. To enter into minute details would be to invade a field so ably and honourably cultivated by the historians of America, who speak affectionately of Raleigh as the remote father of their republic, in which two cities have been erected as monuments to his memory.

Raleigh laid before Elizabeth the narrative drawn up by Barlow: in the December following his patent was confirmed and enlarged; and in the enthusiasm excited by the greatness of his discovery, the honour of knighthood appears to have been conferred upon him, since, on the 24th of February, 1585, we find him for the first time styled Sir Walter Raleigh.*

The usual method of enriching favourites was now resorted to: instead of taking money from the Ex-

* In Burleigh's orders for the musters of counties, where he is directed to report on the force of the Stannaries. MS. State Paper Office.

chequer and bestowing it as a direct gift, the sovereign practically conceded to one of her subjects a portion of her sovereignty, enabling him by patent to levy taxes on particular classes of the population. To Raleigh was awarded the privilege of licensing alehouses, and permitting the sale of wine throughout the kingdom, the city of London excepted. Each vintner was to pay yearly into Raleigh's treasury the sum of one pound, consequently, as the vintners amounted to many thousands, he came at once into the possession of a princely revenue, which enabled him to appear on gala days at court, sparkling from head to foot with jewels; and to build, man, and equip ships which, formed into fleets, ploughed the ocean like those of a king.

Legislators have always been haunted by a desire to regulate other people's morality, to decide when or where they may drink beer or wine, look at statues or pictures, and solace themselves with other enjoyments. The grave and reverend seniors of Elizabeth's parliament were especially addicted to this sort of ethical furor which betrayed them into never-ending hostilities with tippling and vagrancy. Raleigh's wine-patent, in whatever light he himself might view it, was looked upon as a grievance by the dispensers of good cheer. Folks who drink, and folks who sell drink, are apt to regard everything that restricts their pleasure or profit with scant approbation, as Raleigh must have learned

from the murmurs of bystanders while passing in and out of the Mermaid. The following fragment affords a glimpse of public opinion on the favourites of monopoly.

"It is desired that all former licences granted within this realm be revoked, and tipplers' houses be placed under strict surveillance of the justices of the peace, the great and unnecessary waste of grain and victual, will be thus qualified, the common receptacles of thieves and stolen goods will be diminished, and the ordinary concourse of rogues, vagabonds, and beggars utterly extinguished. The objections against the same answered: —It is said that it will prove a great exaction upon the inferior subjects, being for the most part of the meanest sort that are licensed to keep tippling-houses; and for example therein, the exacting grant of wines to Sir Walter Raleigh is alleged." *

Another illustration of our forefathers' dislike of monopoly soon presented itself. The doctors, tutors, and under-graduates of Cambridge, considering themselves privileged by ancient usage to regulate their own tippling, fiercely resented the attempt of the royal favourite to license a vintner within their borders. They were probably right, because hard study needing much refreshment, it was surely for them to determine

* MS. State Paper Office; Reasons for restricting the number of alehouses, 1585. Cf. Grant to Raleigh by the Queen, August 9th, 1585.

when and how much they would drink. Raleigh, on the other hand, thinking himself authorised to station one of his army of vintners among the doctors to deal forth to them sack and tent, the university took up the cudgels for unlicensed drinking, and Baxter, Raleigh's delegate, was thrown into prison. On the supposition that *ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes emollit mores nec sinit esse feros*, Raleigh addressed the learned gentlemen, endeavouring to bring them by authority and logic to reason. In vain—they were stiff-necked, and would not even deign to reply to her majesty's gallant favourite. Once and again did he repeat his summons to the polished theologians; but turning a deaf ear to his arguments, they invoked the protection of the law, which gave ultimately a decision in their favour.*

* See Burleigh to Dr. Norgate, July 26th, 1585, in Oldys, p. 57.

CHAPTER VIII.

HIS PERILOUS ELEVATION AT COURT.

WHATEVER the amount of Raleigh's wealth may now have been, it fell very far short of his ambition: the words by which he expressed his contempt of his employment in Ireland he might have repeated still, namely, that he scorned to be an opulent and effeminate courtier "as much as to keep sheep."

His American grant filled him with hopes, the vastness of which he was careful never to reveal: though they again and again urged him to lavish his revenues on colonising enterprises never destined to bear fruit. With all the power of his intellect and acute insight into the nature of things, he yet found it impossible to foresee to what an extent he should become, by the steps he was then taking, the benefactor of the human race; how many millions, through generation after generation, should owe to him their daily food, so that next, after the inventor of corn, he should most deserve the blessings of his species.

To the health and pleasure of mankind he was likewise about to contribute largely by the introduction into Europe of that article the mere duty upon which during the year in which I write contributes nearly seven millions sterling to the revenues of his country, while its use constitutes the solace of all classes, from the prince to the hodman. If Great Britain, therefore, should ever think of repaying with a statue the debt of gratitude it owes to Raleigh, there should be placed on the lofty brow a wreath composed of the tobacco-leaf and the potato-flower.

Our faults being as much a part of ourselves as our virtues, Raleigh could not, while he lived, repress the exhibition of those qualities which transformed vulgar envy into hounding malice, and frequently made him the most unpopular man in England, though the greatness of his design secured him coadjutors. On the 9th of April, 1585, the first regular colony left England for that part of America which, in honour of Elizabeth, had been called Virginia. The little fleet, consisting of seven ships, under the command of Raleigh's cousin, Sir Richard Grenville,* took out a

* Richard Butler, to whose deposition I have already referred, gives a rather long account of this voyage, observing that Grenville in his seven ships had seven or eight hundred men, soldiers, and sailors. After describing their proceedings in Virginia, he relates that some of Grenville's consorts captured on their return a Spanish ship laden with gold, silver, and pearls. Declaracion, ut supra.

hundred and eight settlers, with droves of cattle to be let loose and acclimated in the colony, the seeds and seedlings of fruit-trees to be planted that they might impress an English character on the landscape, together with English vegetables and plants to stock the kitchen-gardens. There were other seeds, however, on board not so well calculated to insure success, I mean the seeds of discord between the fiery Grenville, and Ralph Lane, the Governor of the colony.

All histories of England and America are full of what followed. Lane and his subordinates were wholly unfit to commence the peopling of a new country. Having no women with them to impart to their dwellings the sanctity of home, and lay the foundation of families,* they at once degenerated into a horde of adventurers eager for gold, and not over-scrupulous respecting the means of obtaining it; accordingly, the pleasing amity which had existed between the first English settlers and the Red Men quickly gave place to suspicion, treachery, and hostility, so that the process immediately began which will have its completion in the entire extirpation of the aborigines.

Losing sight for the moment, however, of such con-

* Richard Butler, however, who is somewhat confused about numbers, says that Grenville left in Virginia a hundred and forty men and ten English women, with provisions, artillery, small arms, and ammunition for their defence, after which he departed for England, and Butler with him. Declaracion, ut supra.

siderations, we may permit our fancy to be charmed by the fresh beauty of that noble land which our countrymen were afterwards to traverse with rapture, or water with their tears and blood. There is an epic majesty in the ideas suggested by their rude description of the vine-clad shores, the cedar-shaded hills, the level and boundless savannahs, the broad, placid rivers, the flights of white cranes, the tall maize, the shrubs dropping medicinal gums, the mighty forests—above all, multitudes of bold free savages, who now smoked peacefully under the shade of the locust-trees, and now swung their red tomahawks on the field of strife.

Hariot, whose story is closely linked with that of Raleigh, from the dawn of these colonial enterprises to the latest colloquies in the Bloody Tower, took, in Virginia, to the smoking of that tobacco, the numerous virtues of which he celebrates; and on his return to England infected the lord-proprietor with his newly-acquired taste. Pipes, shag, and tankards of ale were consequently familiar to Raleigh's apartments in the palace, and led to several comic incidents which the newsmongers of the time industriously circulated. When the Red Men indulged in this luxury, they inhaled the intoxicating fumes through pipes made of clay, for which Raleigh substituted pipes of silver, while our rustic countrymen, when the practice spread, could

devise nothing better than a split walnut shell, into which they inserted a straw.*

One day, Raleigh intending to enjoy in his library the new outlandish luxury, sent a servant for a tankard of ale, and then sat down to his pipe. When the man returned, observing his master enveloped in smoke, he threw the ale over him, and then, in the greatest terror, ran down stairs, shouting as he went that Sir Walter was on fire.†

Sometimes we find the great Tudor Queen sitting familiarly beside her favourite while he smoked, chatting, laughing, and laying wagers. Once she objected to him that, with all his ingenuity, he could not tell the weight of the smoke. "Your majesty must excuse me," replied Raleigh, "for the thing is quite easy." Elizabeth was incredulous, and laid a bet that he could not do what he said. "Your majesty shall be the judge," he answered, and sending for a small quantity of tobácco, and weighing it in her presence, he put it into his silver pipe, which had probably a capacious bowl, and went on smoking till the whole was consumed,

* Aubrey, 'Lives of Eminent Men,' ii., 512.

† Bowles in his notes on Pope, viii., 83, relates the following anecdote of an old inn at Henstridge, a village about three miles from Sherbourne on the great western road. While tobacco was little known in that part of the country, a strange gentleman smoking at the inn excited much alarm among the rustics, who suspected him of having dealings with the devil, or to be the devil himself.

then, placing the ashes in the scales and weighing them, he pointed out to Elizabeth that the difference indicated the weight of the smoke. The Queen laughingly paid the money, saying, in allusion to the alchemists, that she had heard of many who turned their gold into smoke, but till then never knew any one who could turn smoke into gold. From the date of that memorable wager, the use of tobacco gained ground in England, so that it may now almost be said to perfume the whole island from John-o'-Groats to the Land's End.

Through the story of Raleigh's subsequent attempts to realize his grand scheme of colonization it is unnecessary to conduct the reader: for long years he persisted in the endeavour to achieve, with the fortune of a subject, what demanded the revenues of an emperor; and at last, in despair, made over his rights to a joint-stock company. Down to the time of Southey there were those who persevered in accusing him of being wanting both in liberality and humanity towards the colonists whom he induced to emigrate to the New World; but unprejudiced research* has proved all those accusations to be groundless, since from the beginning of his undertaking to its close Raleigh exhausted the resources both of his invention and of his purse to

* See Napier, article on Raleigh, in the 'Edinburgh Review,' No. 143.

promote the interests and alleviate the misfortunes of those who had confided in him. To insist any longer on such points would be to gild refined gold, since we may be all but certain that no one will ever again be found to attempt the revival of the exploded calumnies.

From this time to the great act of justice at Fotheringay all Europe was agitated by intrigues and counter-intrigues for and against Mary Stuart. On her side ranged the whole Catholic world, which rightly identified her cause with that of wafers,* tapers, and surplices, to bring about the triumph of which thousands were ready to undergo martyrdom; while all friends to religious liberty, all who respected the sanctity of the domestic hearth, all who could reason logically, or who had made any proficiency in true philosophy,

* A curious anecdote is related by the Venetian ambassador, apropos of wafer-worship. During his stay in Paris, he says, while a priest was celebrating mass in the church of St. François, a man started to his feet, seized the wafer (or as he expresses it, il corpo di nostro Signor) from the priest's hands, and running with it about the church, at length dashed it disdainfully to the ground, exclaiming that none but fools would worship a bit of bread. Instantly the whole church was in an uproar, the congregation shouting and rushing upon the man, who might have fared very badly but that the gensd'armes seized and hurried him to prison. Considering the temper of the times, the story might have been expected to terminate with an *auto-da-fe*; but as the offender had powerful friends among the lawyers, he seems to have escaped with a short imprisonment, December 8th, 1586. Venetian Archives.

were for Elizabeth. The two women, in fact, symbolized the antagonistic principles of stagnation and progress.

If the contending parties could have kept clear of bloodshed the drama then enacting would have been pre-eminently comic, with its disguises and subterfuges, its overreachings, its hypocrisies, its sudden turns of fortune, its ludicrous discoveries. Then as now, the allurements of the Vatican proved too potent for many among the clergy, who deserted their parochial duties and peaceful rectories to hustle with crawling and half-crazy friars in the purlieus of St. Peter's. When they had imbibed a sufficient quantity of intoxicating superstition, they took with more or less zeal and activity to the work of conversion, which, according to the tendencies of the workman, assumed various shapes, sometimes developing itself in printed libels, sometimes in the diffusion of secret calumnies and incentives to regicide, sometimes bordering on the tricks of the Merry-Andrew. The vicar, for example, of Tarbeck, in Worcestershire, having become a Franciscan, returned to edify his former flock apparalled in "a cloak of rat's colour, lined with green baize, the cape of tufted taffeta, red and blue, his gerkin and gascoyns of the colour of his cloak, his doublet white, and the stockings of his hose of a bluish or murrey colour."* In this

* Substance of examinations, &c., August 10th, 1582. State Paper Office.

rare costume the transformed Lessman could hardly fail to rouse the spirit of merriment in the rustics of Worcestershire.

Unfortunately the Franciscans and Jesuits often concealed beneath their mountebank costume the most sanguinary purposes. Words exercise over our minds a strange power; actions which, described by certain syllables, would excite our abhorrence, may often, when represented by other syllables, be made to appear, not only justifiable, but holy. Even in the sixteenth century, to kill a woman was murder, but to take off a hateful, persecuting, heretical tyrant, was assumed to be an act pleasing to God. Hence the prolific spawn of would-be assassins that crossed the Channel from Rome to make away with Elizabeth. It is true that when they reached the scene of their pious enterprise, and witnessed the enthusiastic affection by which, as by a wall, the English queen was encircled, their valour generally shrivelled into babbling, which, nevertheless, in several instances brought them to the gallows.

Whatever might be the danger that threatened her from bowl or dagger, Elizabeth still continued her devotion to pleasure with one favourite after another. Their jealousies, however, often exercised her talent for diplomacy, and gave rise to much correspondence, many fragments of which still remain. We have

already seen how the rise of Raleigh disturbed the peace of Sir Christopher Hatton, and betrayed him into the employment of ludicrous contrivances for regaining the affection of his capricious mistress. Years went on, and the captain of Irish Horse still maintained his place at court, outshining the noblest of the Queen's wooers, and while he throve in love, thriving still more in lordships and manors. In the spring of 1585, just before the departure of the Virginian colony, we catch one glimpse more of Hatton's sentimental troubles. His old friend Heneage was still potent about Elizabeth, providing for her amusement, and conducting her amours. By his aid it was that Hatton again attempted to rekindle Elizabeth's passion by a present of bracelets with a true-love knot and a letter. At the sight of these tokens, affecting to wake as from a trance, she inquired into the cause of the sender's absence, when Heneage informed her that Sir Christopher had now no place at court in which to rest, his apartments having been assigned by the Lord Chamberlain to Sir Walter Raleigh. Feigning much indignation, though no such change could have taken place without her cognizance, she called Raleigh a knave, and abused the Lord Chamberlain in strong terms. In giving an account of this affair to Hatton, Heneage says: "The Queen used great bitterness of speech towards Raleigh, saying that 'she had rather see him hanged

than equal him with you, or *that the world should think she did so.*'". The writer then alludes in pretty plain terms to the nature of the connexion between Elizabeth and Hatton, which at times she scarcely affected to disguise. "Her Highness saith you are a knave for sending her such a thing, and of that price which you know she will not send back again; that is the knot she most loves, and she thinks cannot be undone."*

In about a month from this time we find this same Heneage writing with Raleigh a joint letter to Walsingham on an exceedingly curious business. One of the features of the times was the liability of Europeans to be taken and kept in captivity by the Barbary corsairs, who spread their ravages from Sicily to the Azores, and from Algeria to the shores of Wales and Devonshire.

In 1581, two Welshmen, Peter Williams and Thomas Powell, were captives in Barbary, and appealed to the affection of their relatives at home to effect their ransom. The Muslims of Northern Africa, prototypes of the Neapolitan brigands, chiefly made men prisoners on speculation; the amount of ransom demanded for an ordinary captive appears to have been about eighty-five pounds sterling—at least this was the sum at which Thomas Powell was valued. Through the intervention of Symcotts, a merchant trading to the Mediterranean,

* Nicholas, 'Life of Hatton,' p. 415.

Thomas conveyed an account of his whereabout to his brother Morgan, in Wales, by whom steps were taken towards his deliverance; the machinery was somewhat intricate, and needs not to be described here; but the circumstances which brought the matter before the Court of Common Pleas, where the case was decided by Raleigh and Heneage, the judges themselves shall explain. The business was perplexing, as most law business is; but after toiling through its mazes the two courtiers will be allowed, I think, to have made a just decision. "When the money," they say, "was sent up to London, one Nicholas Jones attached the same as belonging to John Symcotts, deceased, alleging that because the captive was redeemed by John Symcotts' appointment, though out of his brother William Symcotts' goods and bonds, made unto John before his departing England by the sureties aforesaid, that therefore this money was due unto John deceased, and John being indebted to Jones Jones, attached the same, and Jones being indebted to the Lord Mayor, paid it to him." William Symcotts, however, with whose property the captive had been ransomed, brought an action against the Lord Mayor, and gained his suit with ten pounds costs.*

Philip of Spain, to whom Mary Stuart had secretly

* Joint letter of Heneage and Raleigh to the Council, May 31st, 1585. State Paper Office.

made over her fancied rights to the English throne, now urged forward with double vigour his naval and military preparations, upon which the Netherlands, not doubting that a great blow was to be struck at them, demanded aid of England,* with whose interests they felt their own to be identified. The assistance asked was promised, and Leicester appointed to the command of the English forces, took at once the necessary steps for assembling and organizing an army. Elizabeth, however, who had hastily consented to his departure, without consulting her feelings, at the prospect of losing her long-tried favourite, felt her old love revive, and ordered all warlike preparations to be stayed. Walsingham's letter,† by which her will was signified, reached Leicester in bed at one o'clock in the morning, September 27th. In his reply, written immediately on receipt of the Queen's commands, and while yet ignorant of her motives, he complained bitterly; his English army, he said, eager to be engaged with the Spaniards, were fretting and secretly chiding his delay, while all Europe would censure his apparent fickleness. Acquainted with the Queen's multiplied attachments, Leicester might well be at a loss to conjecture why she stayed him now, and to solve the

* See Mr. Bruce's excellent 'Introduction to the Leicester Papers,' p. 10.

† 'Harleian' MSS. 285, fol. 133.

enigma, proceeded at once to court. There he found her love-sick and clinging as of old, doubting perhaps the sincerity of her new lover, and if not, scarcely regarding him as an equivalent for the object of her youthful affection. The letter in which these facts are revealed is perhaps one of the most curious belonging to Elizabeth's story:—

"I find her majesty," says the Earl, "very desirous to stay me. She makes the cause only the doubtfulness of her own self, by reason of her often disease taking her of late, and this last night worst of all. She used very pitiful words to me: she shall not live and would not have me from her. You can consider what manner of persuasions these must be to me from her, and therefore I would not say much for any matter, but did comfort her as much as I could; only I did let her know how far I had gone in preparations. I do think for all this, if she be well to-night, she will let me go, for she would not have me speak of it to anybody. Thus much I thought good to let you know, and pray you to send my wife word in the morning, that I cannot come before Friday to London. God keep you. Haste this—Tuesday, seven o'clock.

"R. LEICESTER."*

* September 29th, true date. In the calendar the date given erroneously is September 21st, 1585.

Awaking from her love-trance, Elizabeth perceived the necessity of preferring public considerations to private feeling, and suffered Leicester to leave her.

With his proceedings in the Low Countries I have no concern, except to observe that when he needed a body of sappers and miners, he requested his friend Raleigh to raise for him, in his government of Cornwall, a hundred men. To the same friend he had left at his departure the task of keeping him alive in the Queen's remembrance, that is, of defending him from the machinations of Burleigh and his partizans. Raleigh's connexion with Leicester and Sidney exposed him to much ill-will at court, where various schemes were organized for undermining him with the Queen and the Earl. Sufficient materials have not yet been discovered to enable us to follow the subtle course of intrigue pursued by the Cecil faction; but when Elizabeth's anger burst forth against her lieutenant in the Netherlands, both Burleigh and Walsingham laboured to create in his mind the belief that the storm had been raised against him chiefly by Raleigh.* But if surrounded by crafty enemies and false friends, Leicester seemed to lend an ear to this calumny, it was but for a moment; discovering what was in progress, Raleigh wrote him a letter, so frank, cordial, and explicit, that the suspicions which had been artfully awakened in Leicester's mind were at once

* See Mr. Bruce's 'Introduction to the Leicester Papers,' *passim.*

removed. Had the letter failed, the steps taken by Elizabeth would have been decisive: when appealed to by Raleigh, she ordered Walsingham, one of the authors of the calumny, to inform Leicester that instead of inflaming her anger as had been supposed, Raleigh had exerted himself more than any other person living to serve the Earl by assuaging her indignation. After this Burleigh and Walsingham could do no other than acknowledge themselves to have been in error.

Leicester's government of the Netherlands proved, it is well known, of little advantage to that country, or to his own reputation. Among the causes of his ill success may be reckoned the presence in his camp of Catholic traitors like Christopher Blount, who betrayed his designs to the enemy. It may also be inferred that Blount* had already corrupted the Earl's countess, whose eagerness to queen it in the Netherlands may have been secretly prompted by the desire to be near her paramour and future husband.

Blount was a Papist, who, like most other persons of the same sect, favoured Mary Stuart, and acted the traitor towards Elizabeth. In Holland he was one of those who, espousing secretly the cause of Spain, laboured to obstruct the policy of the English commander, and to betray into the hands of the enemy the

* Morgan to Queen of Scots, March 31st, and April, 1586. State Paper Office.

country they had ostensibly gone over to defend. One of the Stuart agents, writing from Paris, says:—"I know Blount's mind and confidence he hath in me, more than in most men living, having been his friend in prosperity and greatest distress. He hath some charge and interest where he is, and his meaning is for the service of God and the advantage of the king of Spain, to further the delivery of some notable towns in Holland and Zealand to the king of Spain and his ministers, wherein, nevertheless, he desireth to proceed by my poor advice and labours himself, being now in a notable place to do great service to all Christendom, by aiding the expulsion of heretics that usurp and invade the possessions of his majesty Catholic."*

Returning, however, to Raleigh and the court, we find that Elizabeth's fickleness and frailty gave rise, in the spring of 1586, to fresh scandals. Sir Charles Blount, afterwards Lord Mountjoy and Earl of Devonshire, coming at this time to court, was taken immediately into favour, to the great annoyance of Raleigh, who could not behold otherwise than with deep regret the weakness of a mistress whom, if he could not love, he at least desired to respect. In one sense he loved Elizabeth then and always—that is, he regarded her with unswerving friendship, and cherished her reputation

* Paget to Mary Stuart, 1586. 'Scottish Papers.' State Paper Office.

more sedulously than his own. It was consequently with much grief that he witnessed the reckless levity with which she laid herself open to animadversion. Cherelles, the French envoy, writing at this time to Elizabeth's rival, says :—

"I believe your majesty is aware that the Queen of England has for four or five years greatly favoured Sir Walter Raleigh, as in fact she still does; but within the last few days there has arisen between them a dissension which occasions much grief to them both. The cause is said to be the distinguished partiality which her majesty has for some months evinced for a gentleman named Blount, brother to the Lord Mountjoy."*

"The plots and intrigues of Spenser's Duessa, the Queen of Scots and her partizans, no further concern my narrative than as they touched the fortunes of Raleigh. Towards the close of summer, 1586, they culminated in the Babington Conspiracy, the twofold object of which was the murder of Elizabeth and the elevation of Mary to the throne. Babington, though an excellent theoretical assassin, was little qualified by nature to face the consequences resulting from the failure of his schemes. To the woman at whose breast he had just held the dagger, he crawlingly appealed, through Raleigh, as soon as Walsingham's providence

* Letter to Mary Stuart, March 23rd, 1586. 'Scottish Papers.' State Paper Office.

had paralysed his efforts, offering to pay a liberal price for the sparing of his life. In an agitated and scarcely legible hand he thus expresses his desires to a friend:—

"Good cousin,—speak unto Mr. Flower, for I wrote unto him yesterday: if he received my letter, I know not but for that . . . . told me that he spake with him yesterday, and delivered unto you a letter that I sent unto my Lord-treasurer, and a note that I sent unto you, and he told me that he had moved Mr. Raleigh for me, and promised a thousand pounds if he would get my pardon hereby. I could promise to pay so much, for I have friends could disburse it for me. Good cousin, speak in my behalf, and move some one (of the under-chamberlains, I think) in the matter, and let him tell her majesty I can do her majesty more service . . . . she would . . . . my fault. Good cousin, deal for me, or if you will not, speak with the . . . . and he will do anything for me, and deliver him this note; and bid him tell Mr. Flower that with respect to the serving I can do for her majesty, I desire to speak to her majesty."*

At length the necessity of Mary's execution became evident: while she continued to live, Elizabeth could

* The real date of this letter must be September 19th, 1586, but an endorsement in a modern hand makes the date February 28th of that year—a palpable error. 'Scottish Papers.' State Paper Office.

never hope to be safe from the stiletto, or the nation to feel secure from the rekindling of Smithfield fires. One Catholic Mary, not a whit more bloody, had roasted Protestants by hundreds, and every member of the new religion who felt within him strong zeal for his faith was profoundly conscious that exactly in proportion to that zeal would be his danger in the event of Mary Stuart's accession. In this widely-spread feeling and conviction we discover the true key to the catastrophe of Fotheringay. Everybody knew that the gloomy and vindictive master of the Escorial, to whom the Queen of Scots had made over her claims, to press which he was then engaged in formidable preparations, would scarcely prove a more humane successor to the Tudor than the Stuart herself. Accordingly, the nation's only hope appeared to lie in the preservation of Elizabeth; and this, as far as depended on human policy and foresight, it was resolved to insure. That Raleigh approved of the execution of the Queen of Scots there can be little doubt, though we find no proof of it in the records of the time. His attachment to Elizabeth left him in fact no choice, for when he saw that the safety of the two queens would soon become impossible, he could not be expected to hesitate.

CHAPTER IX.

ENGLAND PREPARES FOR HER GREAT CONFLICT WITH SPAIN.

In Raleigh's career of storm and adventure we now enter upon a period possessing the deepest interest, yet provokingly irritating, on account of the uncertain light which the records of the time throw upon it. There was then in preparation one of the most portentous enterprises known to history, which aimed not only at the enslavement of England, but at the stamping out of that spirit of religious and political liberty of which England was then the chief home. On the world's stage the battle has often been fought between excessive opulence and rude poverty; and sooner or later with the same result. In old Greece, effeminate civilization was overwhelmed by the barbarian energy of Macedon: fierce savages from the North extinguished the polished but corrupt empire of Rome; and in the sixteenth century the colossal fabric of the Spanish

monarchy, resting its basis on two hemispheres, was irremediably shattered by the intrepid barbarism of Elizabeth and her subjects.

Among those who contributed to bring about this catastrophe none was greater than Raleigh, who combated against the instruments of Philip's power in France, in the Netherlands, in Ireland, in the North Atlantic, in the West Indies, and now in the narrow seas. In saying that none of Spain's enemies was greater than he, I claim for him no more than will, I think, be readily conceded; yet when we look among the documents of the period for precise and positive information, we are rather met by a great surge of public opinion, and dim and indefinite rumour, than by facts and proofs. His influence was everywhere—clear evidence of it nowhere. In contemporary annals it is felt rather than perceived. The clients of two factions, between them all-powerful at court, shrank from emblazoning the deeds or dwelling upon the genius of Raleigh, who stood outside the pale of both those factions which courted his co-operation, yet dreaded his near approach, and therefore kept him as far as possible aloof.

To exercise predominance in this country several conditions have always been needed: to be upheld by family connexions—to possess sway in the House of Commons—to enjoy the commanding influence of great

wealth—to be praised by poets and pamphleteers formerly as by the press now. Familiar with these truths, Raleigh had recourse to most of the means within his reach to create for himself a following in the realm: his family connexions were elevated and powerful, including the Dudleys, the Howards, the Sidneys, the Herberts, the Thynnes, the Talbots, with several branches of the Boleyn stock; his eloquence and political wisdom secured to him a high position in Parliament; his affable and courteous manners and gentle patronage enlisted the sympathies of authors; but all these helps would, he knew, prove powerless unless he could at the same time hold firmly in his grasp that golden sceptre which exercises supreme control over mankind.

It was in this conviction that originated Raleigh's indefatigable exertions in pursuit of wealth. In accordance with the manners of the times, and the example set by Clifford, Hawkins, Drake, Frobisher, and others, he declared a private war against Spain, and fitted out at his own cost, or in conjunction with others, naval armaments, small or great according to circumstances, which ploughed the ocean in search of prizes. Spain's immense commerce extending its operations eastwards to India, China, and Japan; westwards to the whole of America, from Florida to the straits of Magellan, supplied ample materials for

the enrichment of a resolute enemy, and Raleigh was perhaps only second to Drake in the amount of opulence derived from the plunder of it.

One example of Raleigh's maritime enterprises may deserve to be introduced at some length. Minute exactness as to dates can hardly be looked for in such relations; but at some date anterior to that of the Panama expedition, Butler, who spent most of his life in Raleigh's service, was made commander of a privateer, manned and armed for war. Cruizing among the Azores, he fell in with a Spanish vessel of considerable bulk, with which he kept up a running fight for two days, after which, the Spaniard through want of ammunition, struck his colours. The wealth obtained was enormous; for besides the ship's cargo, estimated at more than three hundred thousand ducats, there was on board a multitude of passengers, who were conveying home to Spain large quantities of gold and jewels. Taking possession of all these, they put the owners ashore at Terceira, and then sailed for Plymouth, whence Butler sent word to Raleigh, inviting him to come and take charge of the ship and cargo. The merchandize taken consisted of Brazil-wood, cochineal, hides, and indigo. Of cochineal alone there were three hundred chests, each weighing about a hundred and twenty-five pounds. In addition to the other articles there was one chest two yards in length,

and nearly one in height, filled with bars of silver and gold. On Raleigh's arrival at Plymouth, he treated his captain with much kindness, and having made him many presents, caused the contents of the carrack to be conveyed to London by land, being apparently loth to trust them again to the chances of the sea.

In the summer of 1586, Raleigh equipped and sent forth two barks under the command of captains Whiddon and Evesham,* with instructions to cruize about the Azores, and make capture of all such Spanish merchantmen, or royal argosies as might fall within their reach. Nothing loth, these subordinate buccaneers hastened to the scene of action, and Fortune favouring them, soon rendered themselves masters of

* Richard Butler, whose relation throws much light on the details of Raleigh's buccaneering expeditions, assigns to Arthur Barlow, companion of Amadas, the honour of taking the lead in this voyage. Among the islands of the Azores they captured ten Portuguese and Spanish vessels, some of them laden with sugar, Brazil-wood, hides, silver, gold, pearls, and silk, together with three ships-of-war, in which the celebrated Spanish navigator was made captive. From having been lieutenant on this occasion, Butler was now promoted by Raleigh to the rank of captain, and sent out with a ship under his own command, with which he made prize of three Spanish vessels with cargoes valued at a hundred thousand ducats. The rule for division of the spoil was that Raleigh should take two parts out of three, while the third was divided among the officers and crew. Butler from his own share made presents to several friends, among others to Lord Burleigh's secretary, to whom he gave three boxes of sugar, with pearls, and other valuable and curious articles. MS. Simancas.

more prizes than the small means at their disposal enabled them to convoy to England. In two of the ships they took upon this occasion, were the Governor of San Miguel, and Don Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa, whom Philip had sent out to establish a new colony on the straits of Magellan. Whiddon and Evesham returned to England in October, and Sarmiento, while waiting to be ransomed, resided with Raleigh. Between captor and captive there existed no feeling of rancour or hostility; both looked upon what had taken place as a matter of course, and laughed and chatted together like old friends.

As might have been expected, Raleigh sought to profit by the lucky chance to add to the store of knowledge he already possessed respecting the Spanish conquests in the new world, and Sarmiento appears to have experienced no repugnance to gratify his curiosity, probably because he perceived the inutility of all attempts at concealment. While looking one day together over a map of South America, the captive was betrayed into the relation of a curious anecdote. "When I asked him," says Raleigh, "some question about an island in the straits of Magellan, which methought might have done either benefit or displeasure to his enterprise, he told me merrily that it was to be called the 'Painter's Wife's Island,' saying that whilst the fellow drew that map, his wife, sitting

by, desired him to put in one country for her, that she in imagination might have an island of her own."* After remaining four months in England, Sarmiento obtained his liberty, and passed over into France.

Having remained three days in Paris, he resumed his journey; but while traversing Guiana, was made prisoner by the troops of Navarre. News of his capture having been sent to the Spanish embassy in Paris, Don Bernardino de Mendoza, who for his guilty practices had been expelled from England, made strenuous representations to Henri III., in favour of Sarmiento. The king expressed his inability to procure the captive's liberation, and it was not until Elizabeth despatched a special envoy to Henri of Navarre that the Spanish admiral was set at liberty. On his return to Spain, he was again honoured with high command in the navy; but while proceeding with a fleet to the southern hemisphere in 1592, he dropped out of sight and appears no more in history.

It is customary to charge Elizabeth with a niggard parsimony, which paralysed the efforts of enterprising men, checked improvement, interfered mischievously with the operations of war, and generally obstructed the progress of civilization. Capricious and imprudent she certainly was, sometimes, withholding money when it was needed, and determining unwisely respecting

* 'History of the World,' Works, iv., 684.

the occasion of disbursing it; but towards her favourites at least she was never penurious. Raleigh, beginning life with no property, gradually through her bounty became master of a princely revenue — of manors, castles, lordships, monopolies, palaces, which enabled him to vie in magnificence and splendour with the first nobles in Europe.

Burleigh, in an extremely obscure passage of his work on Elizabeth's reign, alludes to a peculiar source of revenue possessed by Raleigh:—"From the 25th of March, 1584, to this day, 25th March, 1585, Sir Walter Raleigh was answered for his lease of overlengths for one year in London only, 3,950*l.* 5*s.* 3*d.*, and his rent for all England is but 700*l.*" The trade then carried on in undyed broad-cloth was considerable, in spite of the duties exacted from exporters. The length of the piece had been variously fixed by law at different epochs at twenty-eight, twenty-six, and twenty-four yards; all beyond this was called overlengths, and the customs payable upon it became by patent the property of some favourite."*

Raleigh's honours now seemed likely to keep pace with his opulence; he was made Captain of the Guard, Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, Lord Warden of the Stannaries, and Lord-lieutenant of Cornwall. These

* Reasons why Custom ought not to be Paid, &c., January 16th, 1591. State Paper Office.

promotions promised well, yet in obedience to motives, the force of which we can no longer appreciate, Elizabeth withheld from him those higher places and dignities which to her and to all the world it was evident he fiercely coveted. In this treatment of so great a favourite we discover the existence of an influence that she did not consider it prudent to despise: was it that of Walsingham and the Cecils? Or must we suppose that the jealousy even of Leicester himself was at length awakened?

Whatever may have been the agencies secretly at work, Elizabeth, while she bestowed the garter and chancellorship on Hatton, and loaded other inferior persons with places and titles, steadily refused to Raleigh the humblest office in the government, together with any further elevation in rank; and when pressed upon the point, disingenuously replied, that no titles or honours could equal his deserving; yet this was the strongest reason why all the honours at her disposal should have been conferred on him, after which she might have gracefully said, that his merit still exceeded his reward.

In palliation of her conduct may be adduced that peculiarity in Raleigh's character which old writers have sometimes noticed,—there was, they say, an awfulness in his manner which daunted those who conversed with him. This may be merely a quaint way of ex-

pressing the fact, that through consciousness of intellectual superiority, he was in the habit of setting aside with too little ceremony the judgments of men older than himself and higher in office; it may therefore have been feared that if admitted with loftier titles into the administration, he might either have paralyzed the energies of the ancient ministers, or impelled the whole machine of government in the direction which, however beset by dangers, might promise to square best with his personal ambition. This implies that he inspired in all around him more fear than confidence, and in the existence of that fear we may discover the secret of his misfortunes.

The truth embodied in the adage, that "a favourite has no friends," meets us in every turn of Raleigh's career; all hated him who desired his place, and were not scrupulous respecting the means they made use of to obtain it. One of the most obvious was to pique Elizabeth's pride by suggesting the idea that the favourite's influence overtopped her own. In furtherance of this scheme, Tarleton, the comic actor who then occupied the place allotted to the fool in our older courts, was instigated one day to assail Raleigh while playing at cards with his mistress: alluding to some point in the game, the saucy jester exclaimed, "See how the knave commands the Queen;" upon which Elizabeth raised her head and frowned. En-

countering no worse rebuke, Tarleton was emboldened to fly at still higher game, and in language at once impertinent and scurrilous, railed at the Earl of Leicester. His prompter, probably de Vere, now found that his interest was too weak to protect his tool, for Tarleton was expelled the court, and forbidden to appear again in Elizabeth's presence.

Events were then beginning to loom above the horizon which threatened to divert Raleigh's attention from court intrigues and gaieties to more serious business. Spain was slowly taking measures for striking a blow at some rival power, and the prevalent belief was that it would be aimed at England. In this persuasion Elizabeth ordered the muster of the shires, that she might discover with what amount of force her kingdom could withstand the threatened invasion. Her people, though comparatively few in number, were brave as of yore, when they had swept like a hurricane over France, and carried their bills, bows, and lances, along the heights of Andalusia and Castile; so that she felt little misgiving at the prospect before her. Numerous dark prophecies were in circulation among her enemies, and there were those nearer home, and of English blood, who took a very cheerless view of her position. An Englishman of rank, perverted by superstition, and vegetating under its banner abroad, thus wrote to a friend in England:—

"If it be war, I do not think the Catholics in such danger as you write: for a massacre used towards them will be the cause of more cruelty towards the heretics; whereas, by the well treating of them it may procure the heretics more favour. When the day of invasion happeneth, assure yourself there is not the proudest counsellor or minister but will be as glad of the favour of a Catholic gentleman as now the Catholic desireth surety and liberty of his conscience."*

As such convictions were shared by the majority of Catholics at home, who were sometimes unwise enough to give utterance to their opinions, hatred of them and their religion became a predominant sentiment. It was known that they sympathized with Spain, accused their sovereign of heresy, looked upon their Protestant countrymen as imps of perdition, and in the event of success, would not in many cases be averse from consigning them to the faggot or the rack. No wonder then at the severity with which the laws against recusants were put in force. They were traitors within the Protestant camp, the objects of their allegiance were in Rome and Madrid; Cardinal Allen and Father Parsons, though absent, directed their consciences, over which all the darkness of the Middle Ages brooded heavily, so that, swayed by the combined

* Charles Paget (under the signature of Harris) to Berden, January 31st, 1588. State Paper Office.

influence of ignorance and the desire of revenge, they were not merely ready, but eager to murder their Queen and make a holocaust of as many of her subjects as their vengeance might be able to reach.

On the other hand, Elizabeth's Protestant subjects were on fire with zeal and loyalty. No doubt their enthusiasm was strengthened by remembrance of Smithfield, and the echoes of Philip's doings in the Netherlands, where eighteen thousand six hundred Protestants were massacred in six years.* Ministers were oppressed by plans, schemes, and suggestions for the defence of the realm—all minds were absorbed by warlike ideas—new engines of destruction were invented, arms were collected and piled up in all convenient places, and a store of those great guns, whose reputation caused them to be coveted throughout Christendom, was cast and planted on commanding points along the shore.†

I have said that in the midst of all this excitement Raleigh was among the foremost in activity, though the record of his services only presents itself at wide

* Raleigh, 'Preface to History of the World,' Works ii., 28.

† Up to a late period England had imported gunpowder from Germany; but in 1561, its manufacture was naturalized in England, when ordnance, both of brass and iron, began likewise to be cast. Camden, ii. 388. Shortly after new engines of destruction were invented by Englebert. Address to the Council, 1589. State Paper Office.

intervals, and in distant parts of the realm. Now we find him superintending the fortifications of Portsmouth,* now in command of the guard—at one moment he is busy in the Council Chamber, devising with the Lord-treasurer and others general plans of defence,†—then his presence is signalized at Exeter, or in Cornwall, drawing together, arming, and disciplining the forces of the duchy; the chief proof of his sagacity, however, is the bold scheme, the execution of which, in conjunction with Drake, he strongly advocated, and had his counsel been followed in all its fulness, Philip, from the heights of Lisbon, or Corunna, might have beheld the flames of his own armada and the annihilation of his long-cherished hopes. The plan of Drake and Raleigh was to concentrate the naval power of England in one fleet, which, under experienced leaders, should proceed to Spain, and burn all her armaments in harbour, together with her docks, arsenals, and stores.‡

While Elizabeth and her ministers were balancing the merits of conflicting courses of policy, neighbouring princes, enlightened by the Society of Jesus, were organizing plans of assassination to facilitate the operations of war. Publicly, France was at peace with Eng-

* September 29th, 1587, two thousand pounds were placed at his disposal to repair the Portsmouth fortifications. State Paper Office.

† March 31st, 1588. State Paper Office.

‡ Cf. Birch ii., 45. Drake to Council, March 30th, 1588. State Paper Office.

land, yet this did not hinder her mariners from cutting ships out of English harbours, or her king from attempting the murder of the English Queen. Raleigh was robbed by Frenchmen at Dartmouth, Elizabeth was to have been poisoned, or blown up with gunpowder in London; but Henri Trois, while eager to reduce to practice in England the Papal doctrine of regicide, knew not that among his sacerdotal coadjutors there was one who, even then, was leisurely whetting his avenging knife to furnish a commentary on the same doctrine in France.

Undismayed by poisons, stilettoes, or gunpowder, Elizabeth continued her preparations for grappling with Spain: it is true that her forces both by sea and land were small, and brought together but slowly, less however through want of spirit and will than through deficiency of means; the mass of the people were poor, the nobles who possessed ample resources wasted them in profitless magnificence, so that to eke out their revenues they constantly found themselves under the necessity of engaging in trade* or seeking plunder on the ocean; yet now that the day of trial seemed at hand, they betook themselves to their several counties to rouse and direct the martial spirit of the population—Herbert Earl of Pembroke to the maritime counties of Wales, Warwick, Grey, and Mildmay to Essex, Cobham to

* Leicester was engaged in the trade of the Levant.

Kent, the Marquis of Winchester and the Earl of Sussex to Hampshire, while Sir Walter Raleigh repaired westward to discipline and lead to battle the forces of Devonshire and Cornwall.

From what this diligent servant of Elizabeth and the country experienced in the West we may conjecture the financial, mental, and moral condition of the other divisions of England: great reluctance was felt by the inhabitants to trench upon their pecuniary hoards, which they desired to have spared by advances from the Treasury; while the enthusiasm of the Papists, inflamed by the hope of victory for their religion, could scarcely be restrained from breaking forth into open mutiny. Writing to the Lords of the Council, Raleigh frankly describes the state of the shire, and backs with much caution the appeal for financial aid. "I have attended," he says, "the Earl of Bath, and conferred with the deputies of Devon, and the city of Exon for the drawing together of two thousand footmen and two hundred horse, and I find great differences in opinion among them; some are of opinion that this burden will be grievous unto the country, standing at this time void of all traffic, the subsidy not being yet gathered, and the past musters having been very chargeable—Sir John Gilbert, Sir Richard Grenville, and the Earl himself, being more zealous both in religion and her majesty's service, who have always found a ready disposition in

their divisions to bear whatever shall be thought meet for her majesty's service by her people—are of opinion that the matter will be very feasible. It is most true that the careful usuage of their action by the deputies in their several divisions will easily induce the inferior sort to whatever shall be thought necessary for her majesty's safety and their own defence; but some other of the commission of Devon, in my conscience, before the Lord, being both infected in religion and vehemently malcontent, who, by how much the more they are temperate, by so much the more are dangerous, are secretly of great hindrance of all actions tending to the good of her majesty, or safety of the present state: these men make doubt that your honour's instructions alone are not sufficient and safe warrant for their discharge: that if any refuse to contribute, they see not by what they should be inforced, with a thousand dilatory cavillations. For my own opinion, under your lordship's correction, if it might notwithstanding stand with her majesty's liking to bear thereon half of the charge, being great, it would be very consonant to all good policy; and the country, I judge, would willingly defray the rest, which, unless they were ministers of other disposition, will not be so safely and easily brought to effect. I have sent your lordship an estimate of the whole, with which I humbly pray your lordship to acquaint her majesty, and not otherwise to impart my letter, because I am bold to

write my simple opinion unto your lordship, the same being, as the Lord doth judge, without respect or partiality, having vowed my travel and life to her majesty's service only, and for ever.

"I have written to the deputies of Cornwall I am ready to repair thither with all diligence, to perform the rest of her majesty's commands, given me in charge by your lordships.

"From Exon, this 21st December, your lordships, to do you all honour and service,

"W. RALEIGH."*

"The citizens of Exon as yet refuse to bear such part as was thought meet by the lieutenants of Devon and the rest."

This letter was accompanied by an inclosure, connected with which there is a curious bit of history. When Conway took to his own house from the public records a number of documents, in order, probably, to study them at leisure, he bundled up Raleigh's enclosure among the rest, and it remained separated from the letter to which it belonged till 1857, when the Conway papers were restored to the Record Office by Wilson Croker.†

When we consider the present population of Devonshire and Cornwall, Raleigh's estimate must strike us

* MS. State Paper Office.

† See note to the 'Calendar' by Mr. Lemon.

with surprise. The body of the shire (Devon) could furnish, with the Stannaries, twelve hundred footmen, and one hundred and thirty-four horsemen, of which number the Stannaries two hundred footmen. The body of the shire, Cornwall, with the Stannaries, to furnish six hundred footmen, and sixty-six horsemen, of which the Stannaries two hundred footmen. The county and city of Exeter to furnish two hundred footmen. All the superior officers, from the general to the treasurer, were to serve without pay; the inferior officers and the men received a liberal allowance:—

	s.	*d.*	
The Sergeant Major	6	0	a day.
The Provost Marshal	5	0	„
Clerk of the Checks	2	6	„
Captain	4	0	„
Lieutenant	2	0	„
Ensign	1	6	„
Clerk	1	0	„
Drum	1	0	„
Men	0	8	per person.

The pay of the cavalry, both officers and men, was greater, the captains receiving five shillings a-day, and the men one. According to usage, this levy was to be called out for sixteen days only, during which the men were allowed each ten pounds of powder at a shilling a pound, half a pound of matches per day at six pence per pound, and a pound of lead at one penny the pound.*

* Inclosure of Raleigh's letter to Burleigh.

CHAPTER X.

RALEIGH'S SERVICES AGAINST THE ARMADA.

AT length the first day of the Great Year dawned upon the fleets of England cruizing to and fro along the coast—Howard and Palmer eastward, Drake in the West.

A difference of views existed between the ministers and the men of action; the former inclining to place reliance on diplomacy, the latter putting their trust exclusively in arms.* Aware of these political divergencies, Philip sought to widen them by opening up a delusive prospect of peace,† which might cheer the imaginations of the timid, and relax the energies even of the bold. The contest of propositions and protocols carried on in the Netherlands was protracted by the Spanish government, to insure leisure for completing

* Discourse on the Policy to be pursued by England, December 31st, 1587. State Paper Office.

† Council to Drake, April 9th, 1587. State Paper Office.

its own preparations, and create in England the belief that a storm which had been so long in brewing might in the end prove nothing but a light squall.

For a while this policy promised to be successful; the English government slackened in its exertions, paid off a number of mariners, and began to congratulate itself upon the wisdom of its policy. Effingham, however, Papist though he was, never shared in this delusion. Hostility to Burleigh may have imparted additional force to his convictions, for writing to Walsingham he says:—"Pray God we may not have to curse for this an old greybeard with a white head,"* but whatever may have been his motives, certain it is that he looked upon the Low Country negociations as a juggle, and anticipated no safety for England but from her courage and her great guns.

The part to be taken by Scotland was regarded with much doubt and uneasiness: scarcely a year had elapsed since her queen had been executed in England, and her king, the son of that queen, might consequently with some reason be suspected of a leaning towards England's enemies.† A league, it was believed, existed between France, Spain, and Scotland, of whose kings Howard said he had made a trinity, in which he never

* Howard to Walsingham, January 27th, 1588. State Paper Office.

† James, however, guided in this instance by true patriotism, offered to aid Elizabeth against the Spaniards. Birch, i., 55.

meant to put his trust.* True, he afterwards married James's cousin, and was reckoned among the most base and servile of his flatterers; but for the present these facts lay hidden in the womb of futurity. Philip's design was to throw into Scotland a military force, which, being joined by the troops of that country, might effect an invasion of England from the north; while Parma, already on the eve of pushing down his formidable columns towards the coast, should be supplied with ample means of transport to traverse the narrow seas, and march directly upon London.

To accomplish so great an enterprise, Spain had for years been engaged in constructing and equipping an immense fleet, and in organizing a no less formidable army. In the harbours of Cadiz, Lisbon, and Corunna, the several portions of that mighty armament, then swung at anchor,† slowly taking in provisions and naval stores, while the multitudes of soldiers intended for the expedition encamped along the coast, with tents, baggage, and arms, ready for embarkation. In Philip's mind the attack upon England was not a mere political undertaking, it was a crusade, a holy war, to be conducted on God's behalf against his most abhorred and sanguinary enemies. In this belief shared all the

* Howard, *ubi supra.*

† Vice-Admiral Fenner to Walsingham, March 3rd, 1588. State Paper Office

senoras and senoretas of Spain, who amidst their boleros and fandangos, fluttered their fans, and dreamed with charming complacency of the extirpation of a nation of heretics. Rome's sacerdotal battalions, regular and secular, "white, black, and grey," were likewise in a fever of anticipation, not doubting that the fleets and legions of the most Catholic King would be able to purge the earth of heretics and heresy, and re-establish everywhere the orthodox creed.

A consummation so devoutly to be wished set their fancies on fire, and nerved their arms, more especially in Spanish Flanders, where, to victual the thirty-seven ships of war then lying in the harbour of Dunkirk, and told off for Scotland, the regulars in all their monasteries laboured night and day grinding corn, baking biscuits, and preparing such other necessaries as the rough instruments of Catholicism, destined for the slaughter of heretics, might require. No doubt seems to have been entertained of the Church's triumph, to witness which, worthy John Leslie, Bishop of Ross, formerly Mary Stuart's most active agent, came down to Dunkirk, where in his holy zeal he probably superintended the ovens. There is a vivacity in the enthusiasm of Catholics which, when converts are to be made or heretics to be extirpated, assumes a miraculous character. Cardinal Allen, the austere censor of Elizabeth's morals, likewise drifted coastwards to share in Brother of Ross's

gratification; while Father Parsons, secretary to the Society of Jesus, hovered in frantic glee about the purlieus of Parma's camp.*

In England popular excitement was kept up at blood heat by irregular instalments of news respecting the Armada, which Philip and his subjects denominated the Invincible. Upon its movements, it was believed by many, hinged the fate of England. Spies, made reckless by gold, volunteered to penetrate into the enemy's country, survey the havens of Corunna, Lisbon, Cadiz, and gather correct information about the strength and general condition of the hostile forces. Rumour estimated as follows the troops and mariners to be employed against England:—

Italian troops	8,000
From the Indies	3,000
From Spain	17,000
From Portugal	12,000
From Flanders	25,000
Fresh levies in Italy	12,000
Light horse	1,200
Horses garnished	1,400
Artillery service	1,200
Mariners and sailors	8,921
	89,721

* Advertisements of preparations at Dunkirk, July 3rd, 1588. State Paper Office. Father Parsons was an apostate from Protestantism, as was also his father, who, having while in the Tower been subjected to torture by having needles thrust under his finger-nails,

To supply the wants of this multitude provisions had been brought together from sundry quarters:—

	Quintels of Biscuits.
From Andalusia	27,557
From Malaga	12,000
which, with supplies of biscuits from other places, amounted to	185,557
Bacon and pork from several places	23,000
Wine from four places	26,000 butts
Fish from three places	19,000 hogsheads.
Beef from three places	11,000 firkins.
Jars of oil from ten places	23,000 jars

These provisions were intended to be conveyed to England in swift fly-boats, which were to accompany the Armada.

Raleigh, it will have been seen, had an important part assigned to him in organizing England's power to resist invasion; yet it is only by the aid of recently-discovered documents that we are enabled to form an idea, and that a very imperfect one, of the influence he exerted over the policy of the Government. No man of those times seems to have applied himself more diligently to the study of war, whether by sea or land, to the science and practice of fortification, to the manufacture and use of artillery, or to the military topography of Europe. At the numerous consultations

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was hung, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn in 1581. Nichols, 'Progresses,' ii., 434.

held by the members of the Government on the eve of the great invasion, he appears therefore to have been always present, and to have exercised much sway over their decisions. In a curious paper, bearing date March 31st, 1588, and said to be drawn up by the Lord-treasurer, the Treasurer of the Household, Lord Grey, Sir John Norris, Sir Thomas Leighton, Sir Richard Bingham, Sir Walter Raleigh, and others, the impress of his mind appears on every paragraph. In the preceding December he had reported to Burleigh on the condition of Devonshire and Cornwall, and recommended that the Queen should bear half the expense of arming the population. We here find that his counsel had been adopted, and that in consequence the leading gentlemen in the two counties had volunteered to bring into the field nearly thrice the number of men demanded of them three months before. The paper takes a rapid survey of all the vulnerable points on the coast, from Plymouth to the eastern extremity of Norfolk; shows where the Armada was most likely to put in, where Parma's veterans would probably disembark, and while doing so sketches a sagacious plan of defence. First, everything practicable was to be done to obstruct the landing of the enemy; next, if he should succeed in disembarking either at Plymouth, Portland, or on the Kentish coast, a pitched battle was by all means to be avoided

the country was to be "driven," as the writers express it, so that no provisions should be obtainable by the enemy; he was to be kept on the watch by perpetual alarms, assailed by fleet skirmishers, and bewildered by Parthian strategy, till the Lords-lieutenants of counties should be able to bring together a sufficient force to risk a battle.* In the midst of the danger from without, another from within is glanced at, to which Raleigh, in his letter from Devonshire, had directed the attention of the Lord-treasurer. The disaffected Papists, it was expected, would rise, fire the villages and homesteads of their neighbours, and make whatever efforts they could to facilitate the movements of the invaders. In this case they were at once to be dealt with as traitors, seized, executed, or treated otherwise with such severity as circumstances might seem to demand.

With respect to the defence of the coast, more stress is laid on the presence of a military force well provided with pikes, bills, and artillery, than upon the earthworks and ditches recommended by Ralph Lane,†

* Raleigh, long after the event, carefully considered the value of a country's natural defences, which he thought would never suffice to resist a resolute enemy. 'Hist. of the World,' v., 307. Elsewhere he proves the paramount importance of a fleet which enables its commander to choose his point of descent, to outrun the swiftest armies, and all but to secure victory. Ib. vi., 98—105.

† See Plan of Lane, April 30th, 1587. State Paper Office.

Raleigh's unsuccessful Virginian governor. Throughout all the counties bordering on the southern coast, scout-masters were appointed with men under them, to collect intelligence, and watch over the guarding and firing of the beacons.* In Raleigh's government, especially, against which the storm was first expected to break, all possible precautions were taken to forward tidings to London. With his local deputies he was in constant communication, sometimes in person, sometimes by letter: in the beginning of the month, rendered memorable by the great conflict, he received from his kinsmen and deputies, Grenville, Godolphin, and Carew, a sketch of the preparations in progress:—

"Our duties remembered—

"*July 8th*, 1588.

"It may please your Lordship to understand that, according to several letters received from your Lordship and their Honours, we have thus proceeded to the performance of the services commanded us. First, concerning the increase of armour for horse and footmen, we have dealt with the best gentlemen, whom we find very willing to increase the proportion of the returns to the uttermost of their power—the rather because they hope it shall not remain to charge them

* Note of things to be executed, June 28th, 1585. On training forces and watching beacons, September 1st, 1586. Appointment of Scout-masters and guarders of beacons, October 25th, 1587.

hereafter, save only for the present service; but they can hardly be able to furnish themselves with such speed as is requisite, because there is not armour to be bought here for money. Also we must continue our old suit in excuse of the insufficiency of our horses, the increasement whereof we have made us is, besides the former rate, light horses, 100; armed pikes, 200; muskets, 50; calivers, 50.

"We have also taken order for the providing 2000 men in readiness to make their repair as is expressed in the letters; we have given like exertions for the performance of all former instructions.

"Your loving kinsmen,

"R. GRENVILLE.

"FRA. GODOLPHIN.

"R. CAREW."

A thrill passed like an electric shock through the whole south of England when intelligence arrived that the mighty armament was at sea, steering northwards along the shores of Portugal. A small Scottish bark from Lisbon beheld the Armada rounding the point of Galicia, and making by Corunna towards the Bay of Biscay. An impulse of enlightened patriotism hurried the brave Scot towards England. Crowding sail, he was soon in the harbour of Dartmouth, whence the mayor forwarded his tidings with all possible speed to

London. The leading men of the realm now determined upon the course they were to pursue. To remain on land was to hazard the chance of encountering nothing but the dregs of the tempest, while the first taste of its fury was to be quaffed by those who went forth to meet it on the ocean. Leaving therefore the bands of Cornwall and Devonshire to be headed in fight by his kinsmen, Raleigh, with the approbation doubtless of Elizabeth and her ministers, betook himself to his favourite element, and, with a squadron of his own, posted himself on the coast of Dorsetshire, that he might fly at the flanks of the Armada as it passed up the Sleeve;* while in one of his ships, 'The Roebuck,' Burleigh and his son Robert despatched powder and other ammunition to the royal fleet.†

Encountering obstacle after obstacle, the Armada swung slowly along the ocean, which its galeons and galeases covered thickly for many a league. After the detention of a whole month at Corunna, Medina Sidonia, on the 22nd of July, recommenced his voyage, and, in the midst of storms terrible as those of winter, bore northwards. At length the weather cleared up, and on a bright July morning the Armada was descried on the Atlantic, making before a favourable breeze towards the Channel.

* Lodge, ii., 385.

† Cecil to Burleigh, July 30th, 1588. State Paper Office.

A thousand beacon-fires immediately flung from tor and cliff intelligence that the enemy was at hand—all England was at once in motion—from the borders of Scotland to the Devonshire coast, pike and halberd flashed in the July sun, the tramp of cavalry sounded along the highways—tumbril, cart, and waggon, passed hither and thither with ammunition and arms, and the face of the whole island bristled with preparation. The men of Raleigh's Cornish government were they who enjoyed the first glimpse of the Spanish sea-towers, as they came driving before the wind towards their coast. A more stirring sight was never witnessed. Disposed in the form of a crescent upwards of seven miles in length,* the line of battle swept forwards, its vast sails filled by the west wind, and the muzzles of its great guns peering forth menacingly from the port-holes.

Of what followed no details need here be given —the straggling fight along a hundred miles of coast—the destruction caused by fire-ships in Calais roads—the unexampled hurricane, which, co-operating with the English, reduced the Armada to the condition of a wreck, and sent it floating in fragments far up into the North Sea—the massacres on the coast of Ireland—the melancholy return of Medina Sidonia to Spain—and the sudden and terrible collapse of Philip's power,

* Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth,' 1588, ii.

which after that defeat never revived, but went on dwindling gradually till it ended in the utter humiliation and abasement of the Spanish monarchy.

In the great conflict of 1588, with which this process commenced, Raleigh performed an active though not a very prominent part. It may be assumed that, with other distinguished volunteers, he, at the head of a small squadron of his own, joined the fleet about the 30th of July, and during the next eventful eight or ten days co-operated in accomplishing the destruction of the Armada; for as a recognition, rather than as a reward of his services, Elizabeth, on the 9th of August, conferred on him a new and prolific source of revenue in a moiety of the benefit of all penalties and forfeitures for offences committed against the statute of 7th Edward VI., for the sale and retailing of wines, with power to compound with offenders.

The Armada, after its defeat, was blown by a succession of storms into the North Sea, and it was conjectured that all that remained of it would seek refuge in the ports of Denmark* to refit, and take in provisions. Two pinnaces had been despatched by Effingham to follow the enemy and observe his course; but in the great storm off the Orkneys they lost sight of him. Raleigh, with his squadron, seems likewise to

* Palavicino to Walsingham, August 12th, 1588. State Paper Office.

have hovered on the skirts of the flying foe, and to have shared the opinion of those who considered it practicable to overtake and destroy the remnant of his forces in the havens of our Danish ally. To this end it was proposed to despatch a fleet in pursuit, eight of which should be Queen's ships, twelve the property of private individuals, with twenty well manned and armed from Holland; but, contrary to expectation, Medina Sidonia, when he had reached a very high latitude, turned his prows in a different direction, and sailed for Spain.* A large fragment of the Armada, consisting of eighteen ships, with five thousand men, steered for Ireland, where, on their arrival, it was believed the Catholics would rise, and indeed the report went that the Spanish force had disembarked, and effected a junction with the insurgents.

On the intelligence of the descent upon Ireland, Raleigh, who now commanded a division of the fleet, received orders to hold himself in readiness to pass over with a strong force to the scene of his old exploits, and co-operate with the Lord-deputy in crushing the united efforts of invaders and rebels.† According to the peremptory injunction of Elizabeth, Wales was to furnish

* Lord Henry Seymour to Walsingham, August 31st, 1588. Sir John Gilbert to Walsingham, November 7th, 1588. State Paper Office.

† Cf. Note of ships to go with Sir Walter Raleigh, August 28th. Queen to Grenville, September 14th, 1588. State Paper Office.

for the service, one thousand six hundred men, while Cornwall, Devonshire, Somerset, and other western counties were to send forth their yeomanry and gentlemen in like proportion. To transport these hasty levies to the seat of war, numerous trading-vessels were stayed along the coast; and Raleigh's cousin, Sir Richard Grenville,* was commanded to make speedy preparations for the Irish campaign. But if there was vigour in our gallant forefathers, there was not always corresponding swiftness. Letters and messengers flew about with rapidity, but the process of conscription went on slowly; so that ere the Welsh contingent, under Captain Jenkins, could be embarked at Milford, or the English contingent, under Grenville at Plymouth, the axe of the galloglas† and the skene of the kern had reddened the coast of Ireland with Spanish blood, and delivered the Lord-deputy from the necessity of calling for aid from England.

While troops were being slowly raised in the western counties, Raleigh, with his squadron, was out at sea, though the nature of his operations, as well as against whom carried on, remains unknown. That the Government, however, attached the greatest importance to his services, is evident from the fact, that when Elizabeth

* Queen to Grenville, September 14th, 1588. State Paper Office.

† Examinations of Spanish prisoners, September 12th, 1588. State Paper Office.

distributed the Spanish prisoners of rank among her admirals, that they might be enriched by the large sums paid for their ransom, Raleigh received an equal number with Sir Francis Drake.* Throughout the months of September and October the Irish expedition hung in suspense; but in the beginning of the following month,† intelligence was received from the Lord-deputy which quieted the apprehensions of the Government, and made it needless for Raleigh to repair to the bloody scene of his achievements under Grey.

* Distribution of Spanish prisoners, September 5th, 1588. State Paper Office.

† Council to Earl of Bath and Sir Walter Raleigh, November 2nd, 1588. State Paper Office.

CHAPTER XI.

HOSTILITY OF ESSEX—VISITS SPENSER ON THE MULLA.

It would be difficult to imagine the flutter of female hearts in Elizabeth's court at Greenwich when Raleigh and the other commanders against the Armada came back from the wars. In spite of his professions to the Queen, it seems more than probable that he had already commenced that wooing of Bessy Throgmorton which three years later exposed her to shame, and sent him to the Tower. Unhappily there then existed no minute court chronicler to give permanence to scandal and enlighten us respecting the achievements of the gallant gentlemen and noble ladies who made love licit or illicit under the patronage of Elizabeth. We are, therefore, left to conjecture the nature of the cause or causes which involved Raleigh in his first quarrel with Essex, who had just been appointed Master of the Horse.

This young nobleman, whose father-in-law, Leicester, had died on the 4th of the previous September, was now

twenty-one years of age, and Raleigh thirty-six. There existed nevertheless some rivalry between them, either for love or power. It has been asserted that Leicester brought his son-in-law to court that he might supplant Raleigh in Elizabeth's regards, and thus turn aside the current of munificence by which she had elevated her long-cherished favourite to extraordinary opulence and power. There seems however to be no ground for the suspicion; Essex, as one of the first nobles of the land, closely akin to the Queen, naturally vindicated to himself a distinguished place at court, where his handsome person and winning manners soon made him popular. In what light he had first viewed Raleigh is not known; but his envious disposition speedily led him to take umbrage either at the preference shown him by the Queen or at the place he held in the hearts of the easy dames who clustered about her. To whatever source it may be traced, hatred of Raleigh appears to have sprung up at once in the heart of Robert Devereux, and to have actuated his conduct through life.

At the period we have now reached he was still a stripling, while Raleigh was in the very zenith of manhood, gifted, besides, with extraordinary mental power, which had been strengthened by every variety of experience. In the absence of any clue, it would be rash to indulge in conjecture, so I give in the language of an eye-witness all that is known of Essex's first act of

hostility towards Raleigh:—"Her majesty hath taken order to depart for Richmond, on Saturday next, meaning to rest by the way at ———. The disorder happened by my Lord of Essex troubles her majesty in such sort as I remember nothing that hath troubled her so much these seven years. There hath been a challenge sent by my Lord of Essex to Sir W. Raleigh, which is sought by the Council here to be repressed, and to be buried in silence that it may not be known to her majesty lest it might injure the earl."*

Eight years before, Philip of Spain had asserted in arms his claim to the throne of Portugal, defeated Don Antonio its rightful king in the field,† and driven him into exile. Then as now distressed princes commonly sought an asylum in England, where the fugitive Don Antonio arrived in the summer of 1581,‡ and on the evening of the 30th of June had an audience of Elizabeth. From that day forward the plausible Portuguese strove to interest the English government in his behalf, and to organise by their aid a naval and military expedition against the oppressors of his country. For a while no progress was made in this negociation; but after the attempted invasion of England in 1588, Elizabeth lent a more favourable ear to Antonio's project, promised to

* Wolley to Walsingham, December 19th, 1588. State Paper Office.

† Green to Atey, September 23rd, 1580. State Paper Office.

‡ Walsingham to Burleigh, June 25th, 1581. State Paper Office.

furnish six ships* from the royal navy, make an advance of fifteen thousand pounds in money, and permit as many of her subjects as chose to engage their persons and fortunes in the enterprise. On the return of Medina Sidonia to Spain with fifty battered ships and a bankrupt reputation, Philip, to dissemble as far as possible the exhaustion of his kingdom and his own humiliation, openly menaced England with another and greater Armada.

Considering his hostility rather than his power, Elizabeth resolved that her subjects should visit Spain, and inflict upon its coasts and harbours the damage and distress with which England had long been vainly threatened. The justifiable ambition of Don Antonio opportunely supplied her with a fair pretext. Ships were accordingly got in readiness, mariners pressed into the navy, soldiers brought over from the Low Countries, Drake and Norris appointed to lead the forces by sea and land, with Fenner and Williams as their successors in case of accident,† while a host of gentleman volunteers, among whom was Raleigh, thronged the fleet,

* This small contingent, with the vessels furnished by private persons, some Spanish authors have multiplied to 220 ships of war, with 30,000 soldiers, English and Flemish, on board. Relacion de la venida de Don Antonio de Portugal; Prior de Ocrato con la Armada de la Reyna de Inglatiera en el año de 1589. MS. Bib. Nac. Madrid.

† Instructions to Norris and Drake, February 23rd, 1589. State Paper Office.

eager to retaliate the insult of invasion upon our inveterate enemy.* In the archives of Spain we find an extraordinary colour given to this transaction. Among the invaders of England seven thousand women † were expected to be included, who by the arts of licentiousness were to draw over our sturdy countrymen to the worship of saints and images. This refined policy was not lost, we are told, upon the Lutheran heretics, who, in order to allure Portugal from her allegiance to orthodoxy, despatched with Don Antonio a formidable contingent of heretical females in men's clothes, who by subtle contrivances of wantonness were to pervert the whole Portuguese nation from the truth.‡

I have observed that, in this expedition, Raleigh was a volunteer; but during its continuance he appears to have found no opportunity of distinguishing himself. In something like the spirit of knight-erranty, Essex, also leaving the court clandestinely,§ became a volunteer,

* The fleet sailed April 18th, 1589.

† Examination of John Wilson, August 19th, 1588. State Paper Office.

‡ The object, according to an English Catholic, being to introduce the Lutheran heresy into Portugal, excellent preachers were sent with the fleet, and a number of women in men's clothes, after the manner of the heretics; para este mismo efecto para introducir la heregia por via de la sensualidad hayan mugeres en habito de hombres. MS. p. 235. Bib. Nac. Madrid.

§ Norris and Drake to the Council, April 7th, 1589. State Paper Office.

and, by his Quixotism, threw his mistress of fifty-six into ludicrous paroxyms of rage, which threatened at one time to neutralize the policy of the expedition.* From beginning to end no orderly or intelligible plan was pursued: the first active blunder was made at Corunna, where, after taking and plundering the lower town, the army was constrained to re-embark without effecting anything against the fortifications. At Peniche† the English landed without difficulty, Essex being the first to reach the shore, wading up to his shoulders through the waves. At Lisbon all they did resulted in the discovery that their enterprise was ill-planned and worse managed, and that the Portuguese were no way disposed to accept Don Antonio for their king. The English encountered, however, during their long marches, so little opposition that several able soldiers persuaded themselves it would have been practicable with ten or twelve thousand men to force their way through the whole Peninsula.‡

In one sense the undertaking proved no failure—that

* Elizabeth unconsciously suggested the real character of her proceedings when writing to Norris and Drake, she said,—"If Essex had found the fleet they were forthwith to cause him to be sent home; if they did not they should look to answer for the same at their smart, *for these*," she added, "*be no childish actions*," May 4th, 1589. State Paper Office.

† See 'History of the World,' vi., 99.

‡ Sir Roger Williams to Walsingham, June 1st, 1589. State Paper Office.

is in the taking of booty—the plunder was immense, and the loss sustained by the natives probably ten times as great as the acquisitions made by the invaders; for armies spoil and destroy whatever they are unable to remove. On their way home, likewise, they fell in with a number of Easterlings richly laden, sixty of which they captured. No act of chastisement was ever more just. The Hanse towns were not only at peace with England, but in consequence of large privileges granted them by our kings, were pledged not to supply our enemies with munitions of war. Yet the Armada of the previous year would hardly have been able to put to sea without aid from these our false friends, who were now overtaken conveying contraband of war to the Spaniards. On this occasion Raleigh comes forth for a moment into light; the fleet of Easterlings consisted of two hundred hulks, all of which the English would have seized had they possessed the means of bringing them home. Raleigh appears to have made prize of several, but his men not being sufficiently numerous, he obtained a few hands from Sir Roger Williams, who says :—

"The vessel had never been carried into England* without my means. It is well known we had above two hundred sails of all sorts, of which we could not carry with us above three score for want of men: I protest on

* The fleet returned July 2nd, 1579. Sir Anthony Wingfield in Hakluyt, ii., 642.

the faith of a Christian this journey cost me above a thousand pounds. I know not what to do unless your lordships will help me to recover some part of it. The Earl of Bath discharged my men from the vessel at Dartmouth. I presume myself the Earl of Essex, with all the rest that were in this action, will testify I deserve a chain as well as my fellows, but for her majesty's displeasure which doth me wrong in this sort. Where Sir Walter Raleigh speaks of my truth, I cannot stop his mouth to belie me, for he belied the ark of Noah,* which was the best ship that ever was."

Williams then stood in so much danger for having assisted Essex in joining the expedition, that he dared not show himself, or discover where he lay; for, in the blindness of passion, Elizabeth had ordered him to be put to death; which the commanders excused themselves for disobeying, by alleging the high estimation in which he was held by the army.† Raleigh, with other distinguished commanders, had been honoured with a chain of gold by the Queen, who likewise addressed a letter to Drake and Norris ‡ expressing her high approbation of their conduct, and commanding them to convey her sentiments to all the officers, soldiers, and

* Sir Roger Williams to three members of Council, July 22nd, 1589. 'Harleian MSS.' British Museum.

† Walsingham to Windebank, May 2nd, 1589. State Paper Office.

‡ Queen to Drake and Norris, July 7th, 1589. State Paper Office.

mariners who had served in the expedition. It was consciousness of merit, not vanity, that urged Sir Roger Williams to assert his claim to a chain, though in the matter of the hulk's cargo, his attempt to defraud Raleigh was justly withstood by the Earl of Bath.

The fleet returned to England towards the end of June;* and Raleigh, having received his gold chain, and the value of that portion of the prizes which had fallen to his share, set sail for Ireland. In this, as in many other portions of his story, we encounter no little obscurity: at the time it was believed that, intoxicated by passion for her new favourite, Elizabeth had suffered Essex's influence to become paramount, and that he had employed it to drive Raleigh into exile.†

The suspicion is not without probability, though some months afterwards, when reason had once more gained the upper hand in Elizabeth's mind, her partiality for the Captain of the Guard revived. Meanwhile Raleigh was engaged in one of the most pleasing episodes of his life. Nine years previous, during the stormy period of the Desmond rebellion, he had contracted a friendship with the poet Spenser, and now proceeded to visit him at his castle of Kilcolman on the Mulla. Here poetry may be supposed to have formed the chief theme of their discussions, though that they were likewise occu-

* Or in the beginning of July, according to Wingfield, *ubi supra.*

† Birch, i., 56.

pied by politics may be inferred from the fact that when Spenser afterwards calmly reviewed the state of Ireland, he arrived at the conviction that no man was so well qualified to establish peace and order in that country as his old poetical friend, the "Shepherd of the Ocean."*

Raleigh appears to have taken with him to Ireland several manuscript poems, which he read to Spenser, who entertained a highly favourable judgment of his imaginative and artistic powers, though of the productions which charmed so accurate a judge, few, if any, have probably come down to us. Spenser's own reading doubtless consisted of portions of the 'Fairy Queen,' three books of which he brought with him when he accompanied his friend to England, and was presented by him to Elizabeth. Afterwards, when the work appeared, the poet, in a strain of affectionate gratitude, inscribed it to Sir Walter Raleigh. Other authors, both in poetry and prose, likewise selected Raleigh for their patron, as Hakluyt, Hooker (Irish Chronicle), Churchyard,† and worthy Theodore de Bry, who, when he published at Franckfort, April, 1590, his copperplate illustrations of Hariot's 'Virginia,' dedicated his work in very bad English to Raleigh.

If, as tradition maintains, Raleigh possessed a house

* 'View of the State of Ireland.'

† Churchyard in his dedication, 1588, observes that Raleigh had spoken of him to the Queen six years before. 'Progresses,' ii., 584.

at Youghal, he no doubt visited it now. The belief in Ireland is that it was a favourite residence, to which he often retired from the tumults and annoyances of court life. One who saw it lately, observes, "The interior is in its original state, wainscotted throughout with fine old Irish oak in excellent preservation; the panels in some of the rooms are richly carved, especially in the drawing-room, the chimneypiece of which exhibits an exquisite specimen of the elaborate work of the day, being enriched with various grotesque figures and emblems; the roof, being also of Irish oak, remains untouched, having apparently suffered nothing from the hand of time." In the garden are found many beautiful myrtles, some of them twenty feet high, which have given the place the name of "Myrtle Grove."* Here, at the foot of numerous exotics, Raleigh caused to be planted the first potatoes in Ireland, from roots brought by his friend Hariot from Virginia. As he was not present when the plants arrived at maturity, the gardener collected the apples, which were what he supposed to be intended for food, but not liking the taste, thought no more of the potato. Afterwards, when the ground came to be dug up for other purposes, the roots, together with their use, were discovered, and from them Ireland was supplied with the great staple of its nourishment.

* Hardy, 'Tourists' Guide through Ireland.'

In his 'History of the World' Raleigh, while speaking of the long lives of the patriarchs, alludes to an incident belonging to this part of his story; observing that in 1589 he became acquainted with the old Countess of Desmond,* who had been married in the reign of Edward IV.

While Raleigh was thus yielding to the seductions of art and the delights of friendship, his enemies were secretly opening up a pit into which they rightly judged he must sooner or later fall. Elizabeth's single and childless state inspired all who busied themselves respecting the future with the desire to conciliate her presumptive successor. Essex especially, with a craft and forethought not often found in a gay nobleman of twenty-two, entered into a correspondence with James of Scotland, which, assuming various colours as it proceeded, and involving many new agents and shifting aims in its progress, terminated in treason and death. Though his tenure of the post of favourite had been brief, he already professed to have grown tired of it, and his sisters, who both longed to become Queens of Sheba to the new Solomon, actively co-operated in his northern intrigue; one of them, who had boundless faith in the beauty which had led Sidney astray, boldly sending her portrait to the man whom she was eager to make master of the original. To these sanguine in-

* 'History of the World,' ii., 151.

triguers Elizabeth's health seemed to break up far too slowly, though their wishes betrayed them into the belief that she could not last long.

In the jargon of these plotters the Queen was called Venus; James of Scotland, Victor; Lady Rich, Ryalta; and Essex, The Weary Knight. All who had incurred the dislike of the correspondents were dressed up like the victims of the Inquisition, in hideous and grotesque drapery, to excite the vindictiveness or contempt of Solomon and his courtiers.*

Over all men's lives circumstances and approximations, with the originating of which they have nothing to do, exert important influences. While listening to the calumnies of Raleigh's worst enemies, James unwittingly brought home from the Baltic one of the stanchest and truest friends Raleigh ever possessed; one who stood by him in his days of greatest peril, soothed him in his long captivity, and spent many of the days of her unhappy life in the endeavour to save his. This was Anne of Denmark,† who, beneath the breath of persecution, scandal, and neglect, withered away in Scotland first, and afterwards in England, commanding no respect, and exciting little sympathy.

At Court Raleigh's enemies, open or disguised, were

* Fowler to Burleigh, Murdin, p. 640.

† Sister to Christian IV., who became king in 1588, and died in 1648, after a reign of sixty years. Raumer, i., 81.

multiplying, and rising to greater power, with Burleigh at their head, to whom may be attributed the failure of all his attempts to obtain a higher title or a place in the Government. Some advantage he may have promised himself from the marriage of Robert Cecil with the daughter of Lord Cobham, for whose eldest son Henry he entertained a friendship, destined to prove fatal to them both.

Raleigh has obtained in history credit for almost unrivalled craft and subtlety. I fail to discover them in his conduct. He provoked the enmity of the powerful, and connected himself with unfortunate men, assisted the poor, pleaded for the persecuted—a course which has seldom in any age led to success. Leicester, who had been the friend of his friends, and the enemy of his enemies, was now no more; his brother, the Earl of Warwick, soon afterwards died through the effect of a wound from a poisoned bullet. In Walsingham * he lost an enemy as well as in Hatton, while some of those who were working their way into office and power he had reason to look upon as well-wishers. Among these was the younger Cecil, the husband of Elizabeth Brooke, who, for reasons not then

* Lloyd, in his 'State Worthies,' i., 398—402, draws up a character of Walsingham, shrewd and pointed, but without dates or circumstances. He regards him as one of the greatest of Statesmen, justly, though it be now the fashion to underrate him.

apparent, courted Raleigh's friendship, on which he affected to set a high value. How much this sentiment in him was worth we shall see hereafter, when the sheltering favour of Elizabeth being withdrawn, the old Captain of the Guard stood exposed to the chilling airs of a hostile Court.

CHAPTER XII.

ELIZABETH THROGMORTON.

I HAVE already spoken of Raleigh's friendly behaviour towards literary men, with whom he loved to associate, and who, from the nature of his favourite pursuits, rightly regarded him as one of themselves. It was not in such intercourse that Raleigh's pride displayed itself. With poets and historians he found himself among his equals, who loved him for his frank and genial humour, and the earnestness with which he sought to promote their interests.

Even theological writers, whose works were little in harmony with his tastes, often, when in distress or peril, appealed to him as to their natural protector. Leicester, during his life, had been a patron of the Puritans, and Raleigh, his successor in the Queen's favour, was expected to act the same noble part. Udal, a learned divine of unblemished life, though gifted with more zeal than discretion, had provoked the hostility of the bishops, by urging the necessity of a new reformation in the church. During seven years this worthy man

had been minister of Kingston-upon-Thames, whence he had been removed to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where he wrote and published a book, entitled, "The Demonstration of Discipline."

The government of England was then slowly and reluctantly laying aside, one after another, the characteristics of despotism, to the great disgust of church dignitaries, as well as of many judges, and ministers, who, to punish any one that differed from them in opinion, or offended the Queen, were seldom reluctant to take upon themselves the guilt of innocent blood. Elizabeth was a supporter of bishops: Udal assailed the authority of those bishops; by assailing their authority, he assailed hers, which, the judges maintained, was treason. From being a critic on ecclesiastical regulations, Udal found himself elevated to the highest rank of state criminals; and, through a juggle practised by Puckering on the jury at his trial, was condemned to death.

A friend now advised him to interest Raleigh* in his behalf, doubtless because the Captain of the Guard was known to be friendly to toleration. Other influential persons, as Dean Nowell, and the Earl of Essex,†

* Oldys, p. 137, refers to Udal's pamphlet for what regards Raleigh's interference.

† Neal, 'History of the Puritans,' i., 414. Strype, 'Life of Whitgift,' assures us that the persecuting archbishop himself interfered to save Udal's life.

interceded for the prisoner, but without avail; for though he escaped a public execution, his constitution sank under the severity of his confinement, and he died in prison.

Another unfortunate individual, apparently about the same period, besought Raleigh's interference for him with the Government. Captain Spring, an old officer, who had received many wounds in the public service, found age creeping upon him at the same time with poverty, while a sum equal to one thousand five hundred pounds of our money was due to him from the Treasury. Having long applied in vain for payment, he at last appealed to Raleigh, who seems to have been looked upon as the intercessor-general of all who were in difficulties.

As Elizabeth had fits of niggardliness, he occasionally provoked her by his demands of this kind, so that one day, in a pettish mood, she exclaimed, "Raleigh, when will you cease to be a beggar?"—"When your majesty," he replied in his courtliest tone, "ceases to be a benefactor."

In the spring of 1591, an expedition was fitted out under Lord Thomas Howard as admiral, and Raleigh's cousin, Sir Richard Grenville, as vice-admiral, to intercept the Spanish treasure fleet about the Azores. In this Grenville, one of the bravest of the brave, lost his life. No sea-fight on record is more remark-

able, for Grenville, in the 'Revenge,' plunged into the heart of the hostile Armada, and sustained its whole fire, till his ship began to sink under him, when he ordered it to be blown up. As he lay mortally wounded upon the deck, his orders were disobeyed, so that he was taken prisoner by the enemy, who, admiring his valour, treated him with the utmost courtesy. Impatient of captivity, however, even for a few hours, he hastened his own death, by crushing with his teeth and swallowing the fragments of a glass in which wine was presented to him.

Of this battle we have a history by Raleigh, in his most brilliant style, full of proud sentiments, and breathing throughout the fiercest hostility to Spain.

The date of Raleigh's acquisition of Sherbourne Castle, which can only be determined by conjecture, seems generally for that reason to have been wrongly given. Oldys, and all succeeding biographers, suppose the gift to have been made by Elizabeth in 1594; but the facts of the case concur in proving it to have taken place two years earlier. Dr. John Piers was translated from the See of Salisbury to the Archbishopric of York about the beginning of 1589, and Dr. Coldwell, the next bishop, was not elected to succeed him till December, 1591, though he became a petitioner to Burleigh for the See in 1590. In the interval between

these two dates he probably consented to make over to the Crown the castle and manor of Sherbourne. Once in possession of Elizabeth, it was sure to pass into the hands of some favourite, and Raleigh, we are told, personally begged it of the Queen. From the month of March, 1592, till his return from Cadiz, 1596, Raleigh was never admitted into Elizabeth's presence; and was in so much disgrace, that instead of bestowing on him castles and manors, she suspended him from his office of Captain of the Guard. It must therefore have been during the winter of 1591-92, that he became master of Sherbourne, which was thenceforward rendered celebrated by its connexion with his name. What Bacon did for Gorhambury Raleigh did in a still more remarkable degree for Sherbourne; repairing the castle, erecting a magnificent mansion close at hand, and laying out the grounds with the greatest refinement of taste.

In the midst of beautiful gardens and orchards, a river, artificially introduced, broke over rocks in rapids and cascades, and then diffused itself in brooks and runnels, among luxuriant plantations of native and exotic shrubs.

But all these rural allurements failed to detain him long from court, to which a magnet of the most fascinating power now drew him. This was the lovely Elizabeth Throgmorton, an orphan of the rarest attrac-

tions, whose virtue, devotion, and misfortunes shed a lustre over the close of the sixteenth and the early years of the seventeen century. Her first appearance, however, in Raleigh's biography boded anything but an enviable fame. Their intercourse, clandestine and illicit, soon became visible to the keen eyes of envy, upon which scandal made itself busy with the lady's reputation. For a while, dread of Elizabeth's tempestuous anger, coupled with unwillingness to provoke Raleigh's resentment, restrained the courtiers from withdrawing the veil from this perilous amour, because they knew that Raleigh's Panama expedition, upon which he must soon put out to sea, would afford them ample opportunities of effecting his ruin.

The Throgmorton, probably in her twenty-third year, was a tall woman, with light hair, large blue eyes, and fine oval features. Her portrait, seemingly the only one taken of her, has never come under my observation, neither does any engraving appear to have been made of it. I shall therefore borrow Oldys's description, which conveys a clear idea of her appearance and costume:—"She has on," he says, "a dark-coloured, hanging-sleeve robe, tufted on the arms, and under it a close-bodied gown, of white satin flowered with black, with close sleeves down to the wrist; has a rich ruby in her ear, bedropt with large pearls; a laced whisk rising above the shoulders; her bosom uncovered, and

a jewel hanging thereon, with a large chain of pearl round her neck down to her waist.*

How, or by whom the discovery of Raleigh's love for her was made no one has told us; but a letter of the period has been found, written from some one in the palace, to a friend without, which evidently alludes to it. "S. W. R.," the writer says, "hath been too inward with one of her majesty's maids: I fear to say who; but if you should guess at E. T., you may not be far wrong. The matter hath only now been apparent to all eyes, and the lady hath been sent away; but nobody believes it can end there. S. W. R. hath escaped from London for a time; he will be speedily sent for and brought back, where what awaiteth him nobody knoweth save by conjecture."†

> There is a Providence that shapes our ends,
> Rough-hew them how we may.

So it was with Raleigh: this wrong act, through the influence of a benignant Nemesis, proved a far greater blessing to him than all the right acts he ever performed; his successes in war or ambition, the Queen's favour, his opulence, his fame, were mere dross compared with Throgmorton's undying love, which clung to him in the Tower, in absence and death, and survived till she took her place beside him in the grave.

* 'Life of Raleigh,' p. 353.

† Mr. Payne Collier, who communicated this letter to the 'Archæologia,' xxxiv., 161, omits to say where he found it.

Yet, at the outset, Raleigh's conduct was not such as to entitle him to so true a love; leaving her to face alone the scoffs of malice and the derision of the base, he proceeded on his expedition, and wrote to Sir Robert Cecil from Chatham:—

"I mean not to come away, as they say I will, for fear of a marriage and I know not what. If any such thing were, I would have imparted it to yourself before any man living; and therefore I pray you believe it not, and I beseech you to suppress what you can any such malicious report. For I protest, before God, there is none on the face of the earth that I would be fastened unto."*

Here he distinctly denies that any private marriage had taken place, and affirms, with still greater vehemence, that there existed no woman whom he desired to marry. His connexion, therefore, with Elizabeth Throgmorton was a seduction and a desertion. When the nature of the affair was revealed to the Queen, it is no way surprising that she should have been thrown into a paroxysm of rage. The favourite had always professed the most passionate adoration for herself, and now it appeared he had all the while been cherishing a secret preference for another. To enjoy his company she had, up to the moment of his departure, been manœuvering to withdraw him from

* March 10th, 1592.

the expedition, and get the chief command transferred to Burgh and Frobisher. He should now be recalled from very different motives, and for a different purpose. To the Tower with him and his minion, and let both be for ever banished her presence.

This was Elizabeth's fiat, which, as we shall see, resulted ultimately in the overthrow of the offender; for during his four years of exclusion all the enemies he had made—and they were not a few—enjoyed full leisure and opportunity to obstruct the growth of his fortunes, to fill up the places to which he might have attained, and to fix firmly in power and authority the persons most inimical to his advancement.

The expedition to the Azores of the previous year, in which Grenville fell, had been so prolific of prize-money, that it tempted Raleigh, the Lord-admiral, and others, to organise another enterprise, in the hope of capturing the whole treasure-fleet of Spain. The contributions amounted to thirty-six thousand pounds. Raleigh, in the boundlessness of his confidence, embarked his whole fortune; and many other persons became lavish in their quotas through their reliance on his courage and skill as a commander. He left England, however, with the vulture of Prometheus at his heart; for he well knew that when the Queen should discover his heinous transgression, he would be flung in a moment from his high estate, perhaps to grovel for

ever in disgrace and poverty, even if some device were not hit upon to justify, or at least colour, his execution.

Stimulated by such feelings, he exhausted all the resources of his seamanship to put as many leagues of ocean as possible between him and his enraged mistress. His efforts were vain. On the second day of his voyage, Sir Martin Frobisher, in the Lord-admiral's pinnace, 'Disdain,' overtook him with the Queen's peremptory order for his return. To gain time would be something; so interpreting Elizabeth's language as best suited his own views, he persisted in his design. Some days later he spoke a French ship with an Englishman on board, who had been for several years a captive in Spain; this man's report was that Philip, having heard of Raleigh's preparations, had sent orders to America that no treasure-ship should cross the Atlantic that year. This was discouraging; but still the truant lover went on, hoping doubtless that fortune, which seldom favoured him, would now at his utmost need throw prizes in his way, with which he might mitigate the hostility of the court. His evil genius, however, pursued him. Off Cape Finisterre he encountered a hurricane, which scattered his fleet, sank many of his boats and pinnaces, and sobered his mind into the proper mood for obedience.

Before quitting the fleet he drew up instructions for the guidance of Frobisher and Burgh; which done,

he descended from the deck of the 'Garland,' into Effingham's pinnace, and, with the worst possible forebodings, returned to England.

Over these transactions, and several that follow, much obscurity still hangs. Raleigh reached England about the middle of July, and on the 21st was sent a prisoner to the Tower, together, as is commonly believed, with Elizabeth Throgmorton. This belief appears to rest on the credit of Sir Edward Stafford, who, in a very silly letter to Anthony Bacon, says, jestingly, that if he had any love to make to Mistress Throgmorton, he might meet her next day at the Tower.*

At first Raleigh was committed to the custody of his relative, Sir George, afterwards Lord Carew, who, as Master of the Ordnance, had apartments in the Tower, whence the prisoner wrote numerous letters to Cecil, intended for the Queen's eye, and sure to meet it. The flatteries and bemoanings of himself they contain have been deservedly censured, though Elizabeth's placability, and appetite for adulation, obviously inspired them. It is far from pleasant to dwell upon the failings and vices of distinguished men, though to keep them out of sight would be to convert biography into panegyric; it must be owned, therefore, that Raleigh, in the hope of soothing the angry Queen, indulged in the most grotesque flattery, by comparing a lady of

* Stafford to Anthony Bacon, July 28th, 1592. Lambeth MSS.

sixty to Venus, affirming that she rode like Alexander, and that his soul panted to behold once more her golden ringlets waving in the wind about her ivory neck. He not only wrote flattery, however, he enacted it; for when Elizabeth paid a visit to her Master of the Ordnance, Raleigh got up a sort of sham-fight with the gallant soldier, for the privilege of beholding the royal nymph in her barge.

Growing weary of amorous effusions and extravagancies, Raleigh turned to business, and applied to the Lord-treasurer and the Secretary in behalf of his tenants in Ireland. The Lord-deputy, it appears, counted among his enemies, and eagerly took advantage of his imprisonment to spoil his estate, as well as to obstruct the Queen's service. Feigning Raleigh to be indebted to the crown in the sum of four hundred pounds, he seized the cattle of the husbandmen, and sold them to make up that sum. For these, and other reasons, Raleigh foresaw the probability of a rising in Munster, and through his friend Killigrew disclosed his suspicions to Elizabeth. When his predictions were shown to her, she laughed at them; but in less than ten days the prophecy became a reality, for upwards of three thousand rebels were in arms, to the utter bewilderment of the Lord-deputy.

When Raleigh learned that the Queen was about to go in progress, as was her wont every summer, he

had recourse to every device and means in his power to obtain leave to accompany her as Captain of the Guard,—to no purpose. She quitted London without him, though her resolution might possibly have been changed had she known of the plot succinctly described in the following document:—"Some tall soldier, an Irishman, was to execute the enterprise as a godly act, illustrated by the history of Judith and Holofernes. They appointed him in what sort he shall execute the same, to buy a gelding of twenty pounds, and lie in wait for her Majesty, as she should ride abroad in progress, and to strike her with a sword, or to watch her at a door with a supplication, and strike her with a dagger, or strong knife."*

For some time after this Raleigh remained shrouded from the outer world. Whether or not he possessed means of communicating with Elizabeth Throgmorton, or whether he desired to make use of them if he did, is unknown; be this as it may, the cause of his imprisonment places him altogether beyond our sympathy. He deserved what he was suffering, and would have deserved far more had he not, in that forced leisure for reflection, resolved on the manly course of repairing the wrong he had done.

* The practice of Sir William Stanley and Sir Hugh Owen for the destroying of Her Majesty by the hands of Hugh Colsill. State Paper Office.

CHAPTER XIII.

MADRE DE DIOS.

THE Panama expedition having, by Raleigh's recal,* been diverted from its chief purpose, his Vice-admirals made use of the force under their command in the way they deemed best calculated to preserve its originators from detriment. Dexterously eluding an attack from the Spanish fleet, with which Sir Martin Frobisher was left to deal, Burgh sailed away for the Azores, which he reached in the midst of summer, and cruizing leisurely about, now running so close along shore that he could reckon the vessels in harbour, now putting far out into the sunny sea, he kept intently on the look-out for the gorgeous carracks of Spain. Before the fleet separated, the 'Santa Clara,' a ship of six hundred tons burden, had been taken, but its cargo consisting chiefly of hardware, though worth eighteen or twenty thousand pounds to the Spaniards,

* Hakluyt, iii., 9.

was scarcely estimated at a third of that value to its captors. Still, after subjecting her to a thorough rummaging, they despatched her to England.

Day after day small prizes dropped into the hands of the English Admiral, which were regarded as earnests of better fortune to come. On the 21st of June, Burgh put into Santa Cruz in the island of Flores, where he learned that though no fleet was this year expected from America, numerous immense carracks were on their way from the East Indies to Lisbon, one of which had, in fact, sailed past only three days before.

After such intelligence there could be no dallying on shore; putting out, therefore, in all haste, they presently discovered one of the carracks lying becalmed on the ocean, while some leagues to the east two or three ships belonging to the Earl of Cumberland hove in sight. Determined to be first, Burgh lowered a boat, and stepping into it, pulled three miles to take a clear view of the expected prize, the boarding of which was deferred till the morning. But during the night a storm came on, and the carrack running into harbour, its commander set it on fire, and landing his men with a number of guns, stationed them on the beach, to hinder the English from extinguishing the flames. By the skill and bravery of our countrymen, however, the Portuguese were driven off, and all the plunder that could be saved from the fire was taken.

Cumberland's ships, together with others belonging to Raleigh and the Queen, now coming in, it was resolved to act in concert, so spreading themselves out into a long line athwart the ocean, commanding a view of two whole degrees of latitude, they awaited the advent of the other carracks.

Drawn up thus they lay patiently from the 29th of June till the 3rd of August, when the mighty bulk of the 'Madre de Dios' was beheld approaching from the south. There was now a race between the 'Dainty,' belonging to Sir John Hawkins, commanded by Captain Thomson, and Raleigh's ship the 'Roebuck,' commanded by Burgh himself. The 'Dainty' being a swift sailer got the start of the whole fleet, and began the conflict, not a little to her cost; but the 'Roebuck' coming up, discharged her great guns into the carrack, and continued the fight till Sir Robert Cross in the 'Foresight,' the Queen's own ship, and several others, joined in the mêlée.

Consulting on the course to be taken, it was determined to board at once, lest the 'Madre de Dios,' following the example of the 'Santa Cruz,' should make for the shore, and fire herself. The combat was long and sanguinary; the 'Roebuck' and the 'Foresight' fastened themselves with grappling-irons to the carrack, while the guns on both sides were worked without intermission. At length the 'Roebuck' received a shot under water,

and being in danger of sinking, detached herself from the enemy, while the 'Foresight' was required to do the like. Upon this the carrack turned its prow towards the shore, and would certainly have escaped had not Sir Robert Cross thrown his ship athwart her bows, and maintained the fight singly during three hours, till the others coming up, she was boarded and taken.

To us in these days a ship of sixteen hundred tons is no marvel, but to Raleigh's contemporaries it was a sight altogether extraordinary. Its cargo, likewise, from its riches and variety, excited admiration, though the jewels, which, on its departure from the Malabar coast, were supposed to have been numerous, and of immense value, had been stolen and concealed. The other articles on board consisted of spices, drugs, perfumes, silks, calicoes, quilts, carpets, and dyes. The spices were pepper, cloves, mace, nutmegs, cinnamon, green ginger; the principal drugs were benzoin, frankincense, aloes, and camphor. Besides various sorts of linens and muslins, there were canopies and quilts of sarcenet; carpets like those of Turkey, with pearls, musk, civet, and ambergris. To these may be added, elephants' teeth, porcelain vessels of China, bedsteads of ebony wood, cloth of the bark of trees, the whole estimated to have amounted originally to half a million sterling in value, though by the time the goods reached London it fell short of half that sum.

To show the extent to which robbery had taken place on board, it is stated that the 'Madre de Dios,' when brought into Dartmouth, had risen five feet higher out of the water than when she left the harbour of Cochin. But this suggests an erroneous conclusion. Without the agency of theft, she had been made lighter in various ways, by the consumption of wine and provisions during a voyage of some months, by the removal of nearly seven hundred persons, crew and passengers included, a few men only being left to work the carrack. Burgh did all he could towards preventing robbery, by seizing on the ship and cargo in the Queen's name; but the charm was too weak to restrain the cupidity of reckless mariners, who, accustomed all their lives to consider everything Spanish as lawful plunder, helped themselves boldly to whatever they fancied on their way home.

In the courses of three weeks, news of this immense capture reached Raleigh in the Tower, probably through Sir John Hawkins, his principal partner in the enterprise; and on the 27th of August they addressed a joint letter to the Lord-admiral, requesting that the three ships-of-war, which then constituted our Channel Fleet, might be sent out to meet and convoy the prize to England. Their fear was, lest the Spanish men-of-war, then known to be cruizing on the coast of Bretagne, should retake the carrack, and so deprive her Majesty and them of the captured property.

To show likewise the insecurity of our ports in the sixteenth century, it may be observed that both Raleigh and Hawkins were apprehensive, that if not protected by the Queen's ships-of-war, the carrack might be cut out or burnt in harbour, our maritime defences being too weak of themselves to prevent such a catastrophe.

At length, on Elizabeth's birthday, the huge 'Madre de Dios' floated into the harbour of Dartmouth, where her arrival excited unparalleled admiration.* All Devonshire was in an uproar; thousands flocked to the shore: letters to friends in London brought down other thousands, not, however, for the purpose of gratifying mere curiosity, but by illicit dealings with the seamen to fill their purses. Raleigh's biographers lose no opportunity of censuring the behaviour of Elizabeth, and on this occasion are very angry at what they term her hard usage of the disgraced favourite. But in order to enable him to watch over his interest in the carrack, she consented to his release from the Tower,† apparently about the 15th of September, and permitted him, though under the surveillance of a keeper, to repair to what was literally a scene of pillage and confusion. Urgently as

* This was universally admitted to have been the largest prize ever brought into England. Morgan Colman to Anthony Bacon, September 27th, 1592. Lambeth MSS.

† Morgan Colman, writing to Anthony Bacon on the 23rd September, speaks of Raleigh's release, but mentions no day. Lambeth MSS.

his presence was demanded at Dartmouth, he yet remained two days in London, for the purpose, as I conjecture, of making Bessy Throgmorton his wife, after which he posted westwards on his business errand.

On the 16th, Elizabeth issued instructions to Sir Robert Cecil, and Thomas Middleton, appointing them to be treasurers "for the order of all manner of prizes that are come from the seas this present month."* . . . . "The cargo," it is said, "of the carrack ('Madre de Dios'), by the Queen's order, is to be conveyed by sea and land, and be brought to the Thames afore our house of Greenwich, where order shall be given that the same may be valued, and safely bestowed, and hereafter put to sale there, as shall be ordered. The sheriff of Devon is to issue a strait commandment in our name, that no people of London, nor of any other town, shall resort thither, and if any shall come, and will not depart, the same to be committed to prison."

Other commissioners had been previously despatched, but Cecil being the principal, and knowing that the chief responsibility rested on him, hastened with the utmost speed to his post. Arrived at Exeter, while Raleigh with his keeper Blount followed close at his heels, Cecil wrote on the 19th the following characteristic and amusing letter to his father:—

* MS. State Paper Office.

"I do send this bearer only to your lordship, that you may know that I am passed by Exeter, where I did take this course; whomsoever I met by the way within seven miles, with anything, either in cloke or malle, which did but smell of the prizes, either at Dartmouth or Plymouth, for I assure your lordship I could well smell them, such hath been the spoils of amber and musk, I did though he had little about him, return him with me to the town of Exeter, where I stayed any that could carry news to Dartmouth and Plymouth. I compelled them also to tell me where any malles or trunks were, and I by this inquisition finding the people stubborn, till I committed two of them to prison, which example would have won the Queen twenty thousand pound a week past.

"I have lighted upon a Londoner's shop, in whose possession we have found a bag of seed pearls, divers pieces of damask, . . . and calicoes, with a very great pot of musk; certain strings of pearls, with divers other things, which are by inventory described.

"I do mean, my lord, forthwith to be at Dartmouth, and to have a privy search there, and in Plymouth. I have stayed here this night and morning, because I understand of divers things, and by my rough dealing with them, I have left an impression with the mayor and the rest. I have taken order to search every bag and mail coming from the west, and though, I fear, that

the bird be flown for jewels, pearls, and amber, yet will I not doubt to save her Majesty in recovering the pillage, which is almost all desperate that which shall be worth my journey. My lord, there was never such spoil. I have intercepted letters, wherein I find who hath written to London to their friends to come down, and wherein they have promised what they will do for them.* I do keep the letter to charge the parties at Dartmouth, and this party who had all these things is gone to-day back again for new booty. I will take him by the way, and make as much benefit of him and his knowledge as I can. And thus in haste I humbly take my leave from Exeter, ready to ride to Dartmouth this night, at ten of the clock. I will suppress the confluence of these buyers, of which there are above two thousand, and except they be removed there will be no good. The name of commissioners is common in this country, and in these causes; but my coming down hath made many stagger. Fouler weather, desperater ways, nor more obstinate people did I never meet with: I will tarry four or five days at Dartmouth and Plymouth, but no longer. I beseech your lordship, whatsoever any man shall write from hence to your lordship of the necessity of the presence of any bearing the title I unworthily carry, for I will begin them such a pattern that if they follow, much pillage will be recovered.

All the goods, whereof I send you a note, were

bought since the Proclamation. I found, besides, in his unlooked-for charge an armlet of gold, a fork and spoon of crystal, with rubies, which I reserve for the Queen.

Her Majesty's captive (Raleigh) comes after me, but I have outrid him, and will be at Dartmouth before him."*

The inventory above referred to is as follows :—

A great pot of musk; twenty-six pieces of Calicut lawn; eight pieces of calico; eight bundles of twisted silk; two pieces of white silk; fifty-nine pieces of white cyprus; carnation taffeta, a remnant; a white quilted kirtle; three spoons of mother-of-pearl; a bag of pearl, wherein is two or three pieces of goldsmiths' work, with rubies, and a crystal; a bag of good pearl; a quilt for a bed, and a canopy.

Still keeping ahead of Raleigh, Cecil pushed on to Dartmouth, which he reached on the twenty-first, less than one hour before his pursuer. What happened there his pen shall relate with all the spirit and colour of the time. "As soon as I came on board the carrack, on Wednesday, at one of the clock, with the rest of her Majesty's commissioners, within one hour, Sir Walter Raleigh arrived with his keeper, Mr. Blount. I assure you, sir, his poor servants, to the number of a hundred and forty, goodly men, and all the mariners, came to him with such shouts and joy as I never saw a man more troubled to quiet them in my life. But his heart

* Exeter, September 19th, 1592. State Paper Office.

is broken, for he is extremely pensive longer than he is busied, in which he can toil terribly, but if you did hear him rage at the spoils, finding all the short wares utterly devoured, you would laugh as I do, which I cannot choose. The meeting between him and Sir John Gilbert was with tears on Sir John's part; and he belike finding that it is known he had a keeper, whensoever he is saluted with congratulation for liberty, he doth answer, 'No, I am still the Queen of England's poor captive.' I wished him to conceal it, because, here it diminishes his credit, which I do vow to you before God is greater amongst the mariners than I thought for. I do grace him as much as I may, for I find him marvellously greedy to do anything to recover the conceit of his brutish offence. I have examined Sir John Gilbert by others, and all his, who I find clear. I protest to you, in most men's opinions, his heart was so great till his brother was at liberty, that he never came but once to the town, and never was aboard her; but now he is sworn, he doth set all wholly aboard to hunt out others, and inform us daily by his spies, wherein he could not be so bold, if he could have been now touched, which I assure you on my faith I do think him wronged in this, howsoever in others he may have done like a Devonshire man."*

* Sir Robert Cecil to the Right Hon. Sir Thomas Heneage. MS. State Paper Office.

During the next month Raleigh's brother, Carew, who, like himself, undertook enterprises at sea in conjunction with the Queen, captured and took into Milford Haven a large Biscayan ship, laden with fish, respecting which Burleigh bestirred himself as actively as about the great carrack.*

For a considerable period after this date Raleigh occupied an anomalous position. Out of favour, and affecting to be out of health and spirits, he steadily kept his attention fixed on public affairs, watched the machinations of Spain, in France, in the Low Countries, in Scotland, and in Ireland. The intrigues carried on against him at court were numerous, chiefly through the influence of Essex and his friends; yet, as he never for a moment lost sight of the gratitude he owed Elizabeth, his exertions in parliament were unremitting in favour of the Government, which was especially the case in the parliament of 1593, which sat from February till April. The principal subject of debate was the application of the Government for subsidies for carrying on the war against Spain, when Bacon, basing his opposition on the poverty of the people, argued against Raleigh, Cecil, and the court speakers, generally with partial success.† Into the minutiæ of these de-

* Burleigh to Revell and Owen, October 24th. Letter of Carew Raleigh, October 28th, 1592. State Paper Office.

† Mr. Hepworth Dixon, 'Story of Lord Bacon,' p. 65.

bates it is unnecessary to enter, since they belong less to Raleigh's biography than to the history of the country. It may be remarked, however, that the sagacity of his views of public affairs was almost unerring, as after neglecting his counsel, and wandering away in different directions, the statesmen of the time generally found themselves constrained to retrace their steps, and adopt the policy he had recommended to them from the first.

In the same parliament Raleigh combated, though with caution and reserve, the intolerance of the age: persecution, though less sweeping than under Mary, still soothed the orthodox with numerous victims.* Elizabeth, as a Tudor and as a bigot, cared little for human life when the sacrifice of it was demanded by the supposed interests of the church, or of her own authority, as was made evident on numerous occasions, though never more strikingly than in her treatment of the Puritans. Towards the close of the session of 1593, a bill was brought into the Commons for the suppression of the Brownists,† but expressed in terms so general that hardly any person could consider himself

* In 1575, some Dutch Anabaptists being found in England, were savagely persecuted, and two of them (women) burnt in Smithfield. Bohun, p. 48.

† The Brownists were first sought to be suppressed by the burning of their books, but when that failed, two of them were hanged at St. Edmund's Bury. Bohun, pp. 48, 49.

safe from its operation. Who and what the Brownists were may be explained in a few words: they agreed with the church in doctrine, but differed from it in matters of discipline, being opposed to prelacy, to subscription, and to the predominance of one congregation over another, for which last reason they afterwards obtained the name of Independents. Meaning to screen them from death, yet not forgetting who were their enemies, Raleigh admitted they were fit persons to be rooted out of a commonwealth; but nonplussed their persecutors by inquiring if all the men of the sect were put to death, or banished, who should maintain their wives and children. By way of giving full force to this consideration, he reminded the House that the sect amounted at least to twenty thousand persons, and were scattered all over England.*

The fineness of his coup d'œil, and the correctness of his political inferences, are nowhere more manifest than in his opinions and predictions concerning Ireland: after condemning the waste of our resources in France, while we neglected our interests in the defences next the heart, he goes on to say, "Her majesty hath good cause to remember that a million hath been spent in Ireland not many years since. A better kingdom might have been purchased at a less price, and that same

* D'Ewes, 'Journal of Parliament,' p. 517. Neal, 'History of the Puritans,' i., 428.

defended with as many pence, if good order had been taken. But the question may be, whether for so great expense the estate be not less assured than ever. If her Majesty consider it aright, she shall find it no small dishonour to be vexed with so beggarly a nation, that have neither arms nor fortifications; but that accursed kingdom hath always been but as a traffic, for which her Majesty hath paid both freight and custom, and others received the merchandize: and other than such it shall never be."*

* Raleigh to Cecil, May 10th, 1593. Murdin, p. 664.

CHAPTER XIV.

GUIANA.

AT the close of the session, Raleigh quitted London, and returned to Sherbourne Castle, which he called his "Fortune's Fold," and there made what efforts he could to enjoy the pleasures of the country and the society of his wife.

It would be highly erroneous to represent him to ourselves as a calm philosopher, meditating, in the shades of Sherbourne, on the laws of nature, or the vanity of earthly things. On the contrary, he chafed at his forced inaction, and could not be soothed even by gentle words from Bessy's lips, "though fresh as rose in June." Men of action are rarely content. Enigmas to themselves, they must be so to the rest of the world, to whom nothing is less intelligible than the craving for toil and the fierce delight afforded by conflict and danger.

Raleigh was now in his forty-first year, and it would

indeed have been strange could he then have relinquished voluntarily the career of ambition upon which, in his own opinion, he had scarcely entered, so trifling was what he had achieved compared with what he had projected. The maelstrom of his thoughts whirled incessantly about one point—the means of recovering the Queen's favour. He had seen others offend and obtain forgiveness with little or no delay, and could discover no reason why his case should differ from theirs. Yet, while in theory he recognized the truth that "hatreds are the cinders of affection," he persisted in the endeavour to fan those cinders into a flame.

Through Cecil he suggested to Elizabeth his views of the policy to be pursued in Scotland and in Ireland, and, at the same time, adroitly brought in complaints of the unjust usage to which the Queen's resentment exposed him. All was of no avail; the cycle of his labours, sufferings, adventures, disappointments, victories, was to be far more vast and protracted before his vindictive mistress would re-admit him to her presence, though never again to smile on him as of yore. He had helped her to a discovery which she would have been happy not to have made, and, when the period of his probation should have been fulfilled, all reserved for him was that reasonable friendship which, in strong natures, sometimes makes itself a place among the ashes of love.

Finding indirect supplications useless, he resolved upon laying open his thoughts to Elizabeth herself. This he at first attempted in a paper on the designs of the Spanish faction in Scotland, which he contrived to get laid before her, but without obtaining any advantage, or even so much as an acknowledgment. He then bethought him of touching on the topic nearest her heart—that of the succession—which he could handle, he assured her, either by writing or speaking, so as completely to silence her adversaries.

If Elizabeth was imperious, wayward, terrible in her resentments, she was likewise generous, and by no means inclined to sympathize with those who would trample on the fallen. To this fine quality of her nature Raleigh, therefore, as a last resource appealed. "Your Majesty having left me," he says, "I am left all alone in the world, and am sorry that ever I was at all. What I have done is out of zeal and love, and not by any encouragement, for I am only forgotten in all rights and in all affairs, and mine enemies have their wills and desires over me."

No result being produced by these endeavours, Raleigh fell back upon his own mental resources, and out of them began to shape a new course of action for himself. He had already led the way to the planting of the English race in North America, where, leaving it to grow up and acquire strength, as he had full

faith it would, he directed his speculations towards the southern hemisphere, and projected an expedition to Guiana.

To obtain more precise information than he could gather from books, though he was a diligent and quick-sighted student, he despatched a bark under the command of Captain Whiddon to make a preliminary survey of the southern islands in the Gulf of Mexico, as well as of the coast of Guiana, and shortly afterwards repaired to London, where, with his wife and infant son, Walter, he lived in great magnificence. Besides his natural taste for splendour, he had politic reasons for acting after that fashion; since exactly in proportion to men's belief in his opulence would he find coadjutors in his new project. But his affectionate Bessy, who cared more for the man than for the adventurer, looked with a feeling of dismay, strongly resembling prescience, on her lord's design. Cecil had been her friend, apparently from girlhood; he was also at this time—no reasons for the contrary as yet appearing—the friend of her husband, who relied almost exclusively on his good offices for reinstatement in his place at court.

To him the anxious wife now addressed herself, and, in a letter full of affection, though strangely mystical, craved his aid to divert her husband from his undertaking; for to her the East seemed to open up a better

field for enterprise, and she accordingly expressed her earnest desire that her husband should be persuaded to turn his footsteps in that direction. Then, reverting to personal concerns, she says, "Every month hath its flower, and every season its contentment; and you great councillors are so full of new counsels, as you are steady in nothing; but we poor souls that have bought sorrow at a high price, desire and can be pleased with the same fortunes we hold, fearing alterations will but multiply misery, of which we have already felt sufficient."*

Instead of dissuading Raleigh from the Guiana expédition, Cecil gave him all the aid in his power, as did likewise Effingham, the Lord-admiral. The object of the voyage was not to discover Guiana, which had already been discovered, but to explore and subdue it for the sake of the immense riches it was supposed to contain. It was, in fact, the Realm of Gold imagined by Spanish fancy, in the attempt to reach and obtain possession of which multitudes had perished. In the opinion of some, it detracts from our estimate of Raleigh's good sense to admit that he believed in the fable of El Dorado, with the city and lake of Manoa. Whether we respect or despise him for his credulity, there is no doubt he was credulous, and

* Lady Raleigh to Cecil, February, 1594. 'Burleigh Papers.' British Museum.

expected to be wafted by the Orinoco into a region so profusely abounding in gold that whoever should possess it would be master or mistress of the world. For this reason he sought to insure the conquest to Elizabeth, and was ready to undergo any amount of toil, and encounter any danger, in order to make his peace with her, and to engage her in what he believed would prove the crowning enterprise of her reign.

The riches derived by Spain from Mexico and Peru were sufficient to justify the expectation of finding equal riches in Guiana, though the current reports concerning that country put on a fabulous aspect. The whole error probably originated in interpreting literally the poetical exaggeration of the natives, whose conceptions of number and quantity were those of children; they spoke of a few thousand men as more numerous than the leaves of the forest, and of an indefinite number of chains and crescents, as enough of the precious metal to convert a plain into a mountain. But Raleigh, it may be said, should not have yielded credence to stories which afterwards proved to be unfounded; this, however, is demanding of him a prescience beyond human nature, for though actual exploration demonstrated the non-existence of the great lake and city of Manoa, there was nothing in the nature of things to prove *à priori* the impossibility of their existence.

Whatever may be the judgment which his faith in

this fiction compels us to form of him, such was his belief, and such continued to be his belief to his life's end.

In this persuasion, with a fleet of five ships, and the requisite number of pinnaces, barges, and small boats, with a gallant company of gentlemen, and adequate crews, he set sail from Plymouth on the 6th of February, 1595, and in little more than a month reached the island of Trinidad, where he took and destroyed the new city of San Jose, put a number of Spaniards to the sword, and took prisoner the governor, Don Antonio de Bereo, who had for many years been devoured, like himself, by the desire to subdue Guiana.

The extent of Bereo's knowledge, and the real nature of his belief can by no means be ascertained from the information he gave Raleigh. Affecting ingenuousness, he told just as much of the truth as suited his own views and hopes; and his concealments were guided by the same principle. But his revelations, whether true or false, were not such as to quench in the Englishman the spirit of adventure; on the contrary, the wild enterprises, the dangers, the disasters, the alternate triumphs and reverses of the Spaniards, of which he spoke, only stimulated Raleigh's ardour; so that, leaving his ships riding at anchor on the shores of Trinidad, he proceeded with barges, boats, pinnaces, and launches to explore the sunderbunds of the Orinoco.

His narrative of what he did and suffered disappoints us, because nothing begets enthusiasm but success, and because his enterprise dwindles to nothing compared with that of many scores of Spaniards. Not that his daring was less than theirs, but that he was actuated by very different motives: they, in most cases, cared little or nothing about returning to Spain, but were animated by the hope of founding kingdoms in the new world, over which they might rule either independently or with a show of allegiance to the Spanish crown. When their ambition took a lower flight, it was satisfied with heaps of gold, splendid estates and mansions, and an abundance of women, whom they might preserve or kill at their pleasure. Raleigh's mind was dominated by no such ideas. Whatever he might accomplish in Guiana, his real aim was to reconquer the confidence of Elizabeth, to rise at court, to outshine his home rivals, but, above all, to establish the power of England in the southern continent of America.

As he toiled up the network of rivers descending into or flowing out of the Orinoco, through tempests of rain, accompanied by such lightning and thunder as none but travellers within the tropics can form a true conception of, the mirage of Manoa retreated before him. He saw, during short intervals of fine weather, many portions of a lovely country; green plains of apparently interminable extent, with here and there

copses and groves, with immense herds of deer grazing between them—mountains, the advanced posts of the Andes, occasionally presented themselves, sometimes clothed to their summits with wood, sometimes rocky and precipitous, with vast cataracts dashing down their sides. In the far background the snowy sierras of the Cordillera pierced the blue firmament in a thousand pinnacles, far too lofty to be reached by anything but the wings of the condor. He beheld the great river rolling and swelling like a sea between masses of vegetation luxuriant to rankness, and producing profusely all such flowers and fruits as delight the eye or tempt the palate in the near neighbourhood of the sun; but he saw no gold, he discovered no mines, he came in contact with no men or women powdered from head to foot with auriferous dust. Fables without end crowded upon him—

Antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills, whose heads touch heaven,
And of the cannibals that each other eat—
The anthropophagi—and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders.

Nay more, the Red Men, with infantine inventiveness, or the white men, through ignorance of their language, heard snatches of the old fable, which two thousand years before had peopled the banks of the Thermodon and Tanais with a race of warlike women, without love

or pity, who submitted through sheer necessity to bear children, but otherwise lived apart, delighting in savage pursuits, and abhorring the society of men.

From this mythe, which had been transplanted by the Spaniards from Asia to South America, the great river Orellana obtained the name of the Amazons.* In Hellenic poetry and art, the fable of the Amazons created a beautiful offspring, fragments of which still lie scattered over the civilized world; whereas Raleigh's Amazons served no other purpose than to expose him to obloquy. The setting in of the rainy season put a period to his explorations; and leaving behind him a man † and a boy to learn the language, that they might serve as interpreters at his proposed return in the following year, he set sail for England, taking with him a young Cacique as a specimen of those whom he sought to render subject to Elizabeth.

In the course of Raleigh's narrative frequent mention is made of a map or chart of the country, from the embouchures of the Orinoco northwards, including the affluence and feeders of the great river. This curious map, drawn by Raleigh's own hand, long supposed to be lost, I found in the archives of Simancas in perfect preservation, and signed with his name; at the right-

* See an account by Davies of the countries on this river in Purchas, ii., 1287.

† This man, Francis Sparrey, wrote an account of Trinidad and Guiana, to be found in Purchas, ii., 1247.

hand corner, that is, in the north-west, are marked the baits that drew him to destruction—the lake and city of Manoa. It is to be regretted that this was not engraved at the time, and published with the account of his explorations, which, though afterwards neglected, was then so popular that it went through two editions in one year, and was translated into almost every language in Europe.

Shakespeare, alive to everything going on around him in the world, makes allusion to Raleigh's Guiana voyage in three of his plays: Falstaff, in the 'Merry Wives of Windsor,' when sending his boy to Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page, says—

> Sail like my pinnace to those golden shores.

Again, in the 'Two Gentlemen of Verona,' Panthino observes to Antonio that people wondered he did not send forth his son to gain experience in the world—

> While other men, of slender reputation,
> Put forth their sons to seek preferment out:
> Some, to the wars, to try their fortune there,
> Some to discover islands far away.*

The reference made in 'Othello' to the marvels of Raleigh's narrative, which were doubtless much talked

* Malone, immediately after quoting these lines, falls into a strange error, observing that Sir Humphrey Gilbert had gone on a voyage of discovery the year before Raleigh's expedition to Guiana, whereas he died on the 9th of September, 1583. 'Prolegomena,' ii., 266.

of at the time, every reader will remember, especially the remarkable lines already quoted.

Raleigh, being out of favour at court, all his actions appeared awry to those who desired to make his exclusion perpetual. It signified little that his South American enterprise, instead of augmenting his opulence, had tended rather to diminish it; because, if he suffered in purse, his fame was daily acquiring greater proportions, so that it threw most of his rivals into the shade. People of all classes had his name in their mouths; the stage, as has been seen, resounded with his achievements; all London became astir as he walked through the streets, and it was therefore feared that Elizabeth, who above all things admired men of original views and daring conduct, might take him once more into favour, and thus cloud the prospects of those who had hitherto succeeded in exasperating her against him.

To inflict a wound on his reputation, a fiction, originating in petty malice, was circulated immediately on his return from the tropics: it was whispered that he had never in truth left England at all, but having concealed himself in the wilds of Cornwall, had there, with materials previously existing, fabricated the narrative which he called the 'Discovery of Guiana.' Whether any one believed this story we are not informed; his work was severely criticised, and in some respects deservedly, because he had not been sufficiently

careful to sift the stories which were palmed upon his credulity. Yet no intelligent reader will fail to distinguish between the easiness of the author's faith and the disposition attributed to him by some to impose fictions upon others. He described what he had seen—he too faithfully repeated what he had heard; but it may be remarked that it took more than two centuries to dispel the fables which had led his imagination astray. Time and experience have only tended to exalt his character as an observer: his pictures of scenery are in fact so correct that Schomburgk,* who, as a commissioner, was employed by the British Government to survey the boundaries of Guiana, assures us he was constantly reminded while studying Raleigh's work of scenes and places with which he had years before been familiar.

Raleigh appears to have reached England towards the end of July, 1595, when he became to the court an object of mixed admiration and jealousy. While his work was preparing for the press he lived about London in the style of a Spanish grandee from the Indies, exciting additional wonder by having as his companion a Guianian prince.

Elizabeth still remained in her imperial sulks, though secretly, perhaps, relenting. She, nevertheless, still

* Preface to his edition of 'The Discovery of Guiana,' for the Hackluyt Society.

refused to the explorer of new realms reception at court, but was in all likelihood as anxious as any of her subjects to learn how he had fared, what he had seen, and what new projects for the advancement of her glory and power now filled his seething brain. She would wait, however, yet a little longer before her lover of thirteen years ago should again kiss her hand, and bestride his courser before her at the head of her guard. Yet the effort possibly cost Elizabeth quite as much grief to make as Raleigh to endure; but the Nemesis of her beauty was to be appeased, and like the ladies of chivalrous times, she determined to impose upon her erring knight far harder tasks than he had yet accomplished ere she would restore him to her favour.

CHAPTER XV.

CADIZ.

RALEIGH'S exclusion from political employment by no means prevented his opinions from exercising considerable influence over the measures of the government, especially when the forces of the realm, whether by land or sea, were to be put in motion. This we learn from a communication of Sir Thomas Lake, who, writing on the 22nd of August, 1595, from Nonsuch to Lord Robert Sidney, then governor of Flushing, alludes to the meditated attack on Cadiz, but obscurely, because he says, "the post (office) was often visited," so that Elizabeth's ministers had already commenced that system, afterwards carried to so much perfection by Louis Quatorze. The project, however, was opposed, on the ground that it would occupy a long time, while the fleet might be wanted for home defence. The active sort, by whom Raleigh and his friends seem to be meant, wished to attack the ports of Spain; but

their designs, he adds, "were checked from above," or crossed under hand, with great irritation on both sides.* The inference intended to be suggested is, that it was Elizabeth who thus checked the enthusiasm of her commanders, though probably she only bore the censure due to Burleigh's timidity.

In the household of Lord Robert Sidney there was always a birth or a christening, and as much policy as would have arranged the affairs of a principality was exhausted in getting together suitable gossips: now it was Lady Sussex, or Lady Bedford, with the Earl of Southampton, who was solicited to accompany the baby to the font, and now, immorality being no objection, it was Lady Rich, with her lover Lord Mountjoy. Sometimes the court was startled by a lady of high rank appearing in man's attire among the maids of honour, to present a petition to Elizabeth; and now everything was thrown into disorder by the illness of Burleigh, to visit whom the Queen lowered her lofty head-dress, saying, she would stoop for her friend, but not for the King of Spain. While these gallant doings were going on at court, men were pilloried, and had their ears cut off in Cheapside; rustics hopped in sacks from Charing Cross to St. Paul's; mountebanks ascended on horseback to the top of the same cathedral; nobles and squires drew their rapiers upon each other, and

* 'Sidney Papers,' i., 344.

fought in the streets, while priests were hanged, and recusants hunted down in troops by zealous Protestants, who thus hoped to become their heirs.

Meanwhile Philip's immense power made itself the terror of all Europe. It was nearly eight years since the destruction of his great Armada, and finding himself in possession of abundant resources, he reverted to his former policy. Elizabeth, though surrounded by able men, had, properly speaking, no foreign minister; Essex often acted in that capacity, but his attention was not directed exclusively to external affairs, and in any case he was too inexperienced to cope with the policy of Spain.

No one, therefore, knew what to expect, or how the Spanish forces were to be employed. Cardinal Albert, Archduke of Austria, having in the spring of 1596 been appointed governor of the Netherlands, marched into Picardy, predominance in which Spain then disputed with France. His ostensible object was to raise the siege of La Fere, then invested by the troops of Henri IV.; but suddenly changing his line of march, he approached Calais, which he assaulted with unusual fury. The news reached London on Sunday morning, while the clergy were engaged in addressing their congregations; the services were interrupted, and the intelligence of approaching danger communicated to the people from the pulpit. Orders

were instantly issued for the arming and equipment of a large force, to proceed under the command of Essex to the deliverance of Calais, while the roar of the Spanish artillery, which came booming, it is said, across the sea, and over the whole of Kent, as far as Greenwich, quickened the pulses of the English recruits. But the velocity of Albert's movements outstripped the speed of Elizabeth; before the slightest aid could be afforded to the French garrison, Calais fell, and the Spanish arms were firmly planted within twenty miles of the English coast.

Ministers now perceived that, unless some great blow could be struck in its defence, the English monarchy might be suddenly toppled from its foundations, and remembered the counsel given in the autumn of 1587, by Drake and Raleigh: which was, that instead of remaining inert, to be assailed in their own homes, the English should attack and destroy the enemy's forces in harbour. Now then an English fleet, with the aid of a Dutch contingent, was fitted out, consisting of a hundred and fifty-six ships of war, transports and tenders; but instead of carrying an army of nearly forty thousand men, as Philip's Armada had done, Elizabeth's land forces on board the fleet scarcely amounted to eight thousand. The difference, however, was in the men; for pompous grandees, priests, monks, and confessors were substituted such men as Lord

Howard of Effingham, Sir Walter Raleigh, Lord Thomas Howard, Sir Francis Vere, and the Earl of Essex.

One of the features of those days was the deficiency of intelligence—no steamers running against wind and tide, no electric wires palpitating along the surface of the earth, carried almost with the swiftness of thought tidings of approaching danger. The Spanish government heard that in the southern and western parts of England great guns were cast, mariners pressed, war ships collected; but through overweening confidence in its own power, rested satisfied with the persuasion that the heretics were merely mustering for their own defence.

Though the fleet was to assemble at Plymouth, the necessary ships and men were slow in arriving, some being elsewhere with Effingham, others with Raleigh. Essex himself repaired early to Plymouth, where he chafed and fretted at the absence of his admiral and rear-admiral. On the 16th of April, six days after the fall of Calais, Effingham wrote to Cecil, urging him to hasten Raleigh's departure, in a tone which seemed to imply that he shared the persuasion then commonly entertained that the Rear-admiral had some politic end to serve by delay. "I was aboard my ship," he says, "in the road two miles off, when we heard of the loss of Calais. I referred all to the Earl, who I

knew would certify her Majesty. This morning, being come ashore to visit the Duc (de Bouillon) we had an alarm that the Spanish fleet was in sight, which brought every man with all diligence aboard, so as I had not seen the like, and ships so soon under sail; but the fleet proved but ships that came from Bordeaux and Rochelle . . . . . I pray you hasten away Sir W. Raleigh. I hope my Lord Thomas Howard will be [here] this night, and my son Southwell, if they be not come away, hasten them."*

This was a period of great excitement throughout the country, for a second Armada was expected before our own fleet, intended to intercept it, could put to sea. The belief still gained ground that the enterprise was delayed through Raleigh's slackness; both at Plymouth and at court discord prevailed. Sir Anthony Shirley, having reviewed the forces at Plymouth, foretold that the expedition would end in smoke, his mind having been embittered by Lord Effingham, who took five ships and five hundred men from the force he himself had collected against the island of San Tome. This enterprise, however, proved as unsuccessful as his prediction.†

No influential man ever left the court without losing ground; for his back was no sooner turned than his adversaries began to demonstrate the correctness of the

* Lord Admiral to Cecil, April 16th, 1596. Add. MSS., 6177.

† Birch, i., 490, 491.

maxim, *Les absens ont toujours tort.* Essex experienced the truth of the observation; for his enemies—and they were not a few—at once exerted their utmost ingenuity to prejudice Elizabeth against him. Among these was Henry Brooke, soon to be Lord Cobham, with whom Raleigh's fortunes were unhappily bound up. The Earl himself adopted a tone of swagger in speaking of the Cadiz expedition, saying, he would carry it through or become a monk at an hour's notice. His language, if not his opinion, was influenced by the Papists who flocked about him, and it would have been fortunate both for himself and for many others had circumstances constrained him to cover his wild head with a cowl. Meanwhile his place of foreign secretary passed into the hands of Henry Brooke, to whom the duc de Bouillon was directed to address any communications he might have to make to the English government.

Raleigh's absence from the fleet still continuing, and no one being able to account for it, rumours of all kinds got abroad; Essex's friends displayed the greatest diligence in circulating unfavourable interpretations; writing to his brother Francis in May, Anthony Bacon says, "I doubt not you have heard of Mr. Fulk Greville's employment to carry to the two generals the royal benediction; and yet Sir Walter Raleigh's slackness and stay, by the way, is not thought to be upon sloth or negligence, but upon pregnant design, which will be

brought forth very shortly, and found to be according to the French proverb, '*Fils ou fille.*'"

Another of Essex's adherents, the popish spy, Standen, writing to Anthony Bacon from Exeter, May 18th, says that Essex was put to insupportable expense by the fleet being detained at Plymouth, through the fault, as he suggested, of Sir Walter Raleigh. The object of these complaints evidently was to keep up in Elizabeth's mind the ill-feeling she was still believed to cherish against Bessy Throgmorton's lover.

And what in reality was Raleigh doing all this while? Writing from Northfleet to Cecil on the 4th of May, he states satisfactory reasons for the "slackness" objected to him. "The ships that remain above are six; the great fly-boat of London called the 'George,' another called the 'Jacob of Agarflout,' a third, the 'Joshua of Horn,' a fourth, and some others. Pope, the marshal of the Admiralty, can inform Mr. Burrows, for Pope pressed all the ships; he can also inform you how little her majesty's authority is respected, for as fast as we press men one day, they run away another, and say they will not serve. I beseech you, sir, to vouchsafe to send for Pope of St. Katherine's, who hath taken great pains already, and to tell him that I have remembered his service, and he will do more than any. There are at Gravesend, and between that and sea, some

* Birch, i., 486.

twenty-two sail, those above, that are of great draught of water, cannot tide it down, for they must take the high water, and dare not move after an hour's ebb, until they be past Barking Shelf, and now the wind is so strong as it is impossible to turn down, or to warp down, or to tow. I cannot write to our general this time, for the pursuivant found me in a country village, a mile from Gravesend, hunting after runaway mariners, and dragging in the mire from ale-house to ale-house, and could get no paper, but that the pursuivant had this piece.

"Sir, by the living God, there is no king, nor queen, nor general, nor any else, can take more care than I do to be gone; but I humbly pray you but to speak with Mr. Burrows, and let him be sent for afterward before my Lord Chamberlain, that they may hear him speak, whether any man can get down with this wind or no, which will satisfy them of me.

"If this strong wind last, I will ride to Blackwall, to speak with you and kiss your hand."*

Raleigh arrived at Plymouth on the 21st of May, bringing with him Charles Chester, Sir Edward Cooke, one of Bacon's cousins, and his brother Anthony Cooke, who likewise belonged to the expedition. With Raleigh, or before him, came his wife's brother, Arthur Throgmorton, whom Essex's satellites called a hot-headed

* Add. MSS., 6177. B. M.

youth, because, on occasion of a dispute at table between the Rear-admiral and the Lord-marshal, Arthur took, as was natural, the side of his brother-in-law; but Essex's Catholic spy, who never lost an opportunity of censuring Raleigh or his friends, relates that, "Yester night, at table in drink, in the presence of my Lords Generals, and the Flemings of the Low Country fleet, there passed some words, the matter being taken against the Marshal by Arthur Throgmorton, a hot-headed youth, who disborded in such words as my Lords commanded him from the table; so that for all this voyage, I see already the fire kindled that must consume us inwardly." However, though Throgmorton appeared most forward in the quarrel, Raleigh was the cause; yet, in their resentment, the generals dismissed the young man from the service, but fearing, probably, the steps which Raleigh might be inclined to take, they restored him to his rank, and for the gallantry he displayed at Cadiz he was knighted by the hands of Essex himself.

The fears occasioned by the disagreement between Raleigh and Vere proved groundless, for though the latter might have been easily provoked to risk the interests of the service, the former was far too anxious to regain the favour of Elizabeth to sacrifice the slightest chance. His behaviour, indeed, was regulated by so much prudence, that the Earl's adherents, who would have been only too glad to witness the contrary, set

it down to craft. "Sir Walter Raleigh's carriage to my Lord of Essex," observes Standen, "is with the cunningest respect and deepest humility that ever I saw or have trowed."*

This writer, a pupil of the Jesuits, doubtless understood Raleigh's policy, and the circumstances which compelled him to adopt it. Subordinated to inferior men by the Queen's caprice, and barely permitted to hold a command in the navy at all, he was under the necessity of conciliating his enemies by feigned deference. Had Elizabeth been the fine judge of men which many suppose her to have been, instead of writing prayers for the fleet, and amorous letters to Essex, she would have placed the naval strength of her kingdom under the direction of the greatest seaman then afloat, which would have enabled her at once to humble Philip, and turn the golden tide of commerce from the harbours of Cadiz, Lisbon, and Corunna, into those of London and Plymouth.

The arrangements for the government of the fleet, however, were ill calculated to insure that cheerful co-operation between its commanders, without which signal success could hardly be reckoned upon: the chief authority, divided between Essex and Lord Charles Howard, was too equally balanced to give either of those leaders undoubted supremacy: it was said, indeed,

* Birch, ii., 15.

that to Essex belonged the principal authority by land, and to Effingham the chief command at sea; but unless in fights on the ocean, this clearly conferred on Essex the lead, since upon entering harbours, and disembarking troops, Effingham's authority terminated. Between the Rear-admiral Raleigh, and the Lord-marshal Vere, there existed the same ground of dispute respecting superiority.

All things being in readiness, the fleet on the 1st of June sailed from Plymouth with sealed orders. Desirous of taking the enemy by surprise, they captured as they went along such small vessels as might have conveyed intelligence of their approach, but when in the latitude of Lisbon a fly-boat, which was sought to be taken by the 'Swan,' effected its escape, and made towards the mouth of the Tagus. It was therefore not doubted that the designs of the English would be made generally known, and the enemy put upon their guard; but fortunately the 'John and Frances,' a ship of London, fell in with the fly-boat, and made prize of her almost close to the shore.*

The narrators of such transactions, influenced by different motives, by love, by hatred, by national prejudice, by ignorance, necessarily differ widely from each other; but perhaps no affair of this kind was ever so diversely described as the Cadiz expedition. Accord-

* Monson, 'Naval Tracts' in Churchill, iii., 28.

ing to some the English Armada flashed upon the devoted city suddenly, before the slightest preparations had been made for resistance; while others maintain it had been seen off Cape St. Vincent, engaged in action with a Spanish ship. A friar who was in Cadiz at the time, and having been well used by our countrymen, speaks of them with the warmth of gratitude, observes that the fleet was first beheld by the sentinels on duty, about two o'clock on Sunday morning, and that as the day broke it neared the shore in full sail, all the ships dressed with colours and streamers.

On Saturday* the 20th, Raleigh, in the 'Warspite,' had been ordered to advance before the fleet† to intercept such Spanish vessels as might attempt to pass out from San Lucar or Cadiz. In his absence it was resolved by Essex and Effingham that the city should be first taken, in order that the guns of its forts and batteries might be silenced before the fight with the ships should be commenced. In pursuance of this plan Raleigh, at his return on Sunday afternoon, found the operation of disembarking the troops actually in progress, though the billows ran so high before the south wind that the boats were every moment in danger of being swamped.

Proceeding first to Essex's ship, the 'Repulse,' Raleigh,

* Birch, ii., 46; Monson iii., 28.

† Raleigh, Works, viii., 668.

in presence of all the colonels and naval captains, strongly protested against the disembarkation, pointing out that a large number of the soldiers must inevitably be lost, as many had already been. To this Essex replied that the plan was that of the Lord-admiral, who refused to hazard an engagement with the Spanish fleet unless the city should be first captured. With Essex's consent Raleigh repaired to the 'Ark Royal,' where he argued the point with Effingham so successfully that it was agreed to postpone the attack until the morning, and to begin with the ships. Upon this Raleigh again got into his boat, and rowed towards the 'Repulse,' where he saw Essex leaning over the bulwarks, and shouted out to him from below the success of his mission, at which Essex for joy threw his cap into the sea. Several officers, however, desirous of creating a high idea of their valour, blamed the delay obtained by Raleigh's representations, and would have had the action commence at once; yet Essex and the Lord-admiral, perceiving the absurdity of such a course, adhered to the policy of the great seaman.

By the time the soldiers and mariners had regained their ships, the sun had set, and the business of deliberation commenced. Both by land and sea the English are fond, on important occasions, of taking counsel in the night. With the forts on Cadiz Island, the galleys, the argosies, almost within range of gun, the

English decided upon their plan of operations. Never did braver men meet to deliberate on conflict with the foe—Essex, Effingham, Howard, Carew, Southwell, the two Cliffords, all eagerly coveted the honour of leading the vanguard on the morrow, which, however, by universal consent, at his pressing entreaty, was assigned to Raleigh.* His most strenuous rival for the post of honour was Lord Thomas Howard, but after much contention and argument the Vice-admiral gave way, and the explorer of Guiana was left master of the position.†

While the English passed the night in these martial discussions, what was going on in Cadiz?

From Xeres, from San Lucar, from Arcos, from Chillana,‡ considerable bodies of troops, horse and foot, had, at the requisition of the Corregidor, hastened, some with arms, others without, to what they regarded rather as a banquet than a battle. The mariners of the fleet had likewise left their ships to sleep on shore, where they devoted the hours to merriment and licentiousness. Nearly the whole population was in

* Essex, 'Relation of Cadiz Action,' in Birch.

† Effingham's 'Relation,' in Birch, ii., 53.

‡ Birch, ii., 56. "Xeres alone furnished two thousand men, but so ill supplied that it was necessary to provide them with powder, lead, and matches." 'Relation,' p. 237. The arquebuses and other arms used against our countrymen at Cadiz may still be seen in the Armeria at Madrid.

the streets, which, lighted up by lamps, by tapers, by torches, by blazing tar-barrels, looked as brilliant as by day,* while music, singing, and dancing went on as upon the eve of some religious festival. The friars from the monasteries, in cowl and cassock, passed to and fro among the crowds, inwardly grieved at the little heed paid by the populace to the coming storm.

Next morning, as they stood upon the ramparts, they beheld the English fleet weigh anchor, marshal its strength, and then in magnificent order, with bellying sails and colours flying, prepare to swoop into the harbour.† At the head of this terrible array came Sir Walter Raleigh in the 'Warspite,' Lord Thomas Howard in the 'Nonpareil,' Sir Francis Vere in the 'Rainbow,' Sir George Carew in the 'Mary Rose,' Sir Conyers and Sir Alexander Clifford in the 'Dreadnought,' while Effingham and Essex, in the 'Ark Royal' and the 'Repulse,' pressed upon the rear of the column, eager to bring their vast bulk as near as possible to the impending fray.

Let the reader figure to himself an immense haven,‡

* 'Relacion de lo sucedido en Cadiz.' M.S. Bib. Nac. Madrid.

† For a knowledge of what took place in Cadiz, I am indebted to a curious little narrative written by a nameless friar, entitled 'Relacion de lo sucedido en Cadiz, año de 1596,' p. 173. Bib. Nac. Madrid.

‡ By the courtesy of the gentlemen of the Ministerio de Marina at Madrid, I was enabled to consult numerous ancient charts of Cadiz Bay, though none so old as 1596. There is, however, in our own

entering from the Atlantic into the land, and extending eight or ten miles from north-west to south-east, having the main on the left hand, and the large flat island on which Cadiz is situated on the right. From this expanse of water two rivers open up between salt marshes an entrance into the interior, while at the southern extremity of the island a narrow though deep channel communicates with the ocean. Over the entrance to this channel a series of arches, called the Puente del Suaco, was then thrown. Beneath the surface of the calm water lurked numerous shoals, divided from each other by narrow channels, to thread which demanded the skill of the most experienced pilots; for the slightest deviation to the right or to the left brought ships sailing inward aground.

That St. Barnabas day, so often the brightest in the year, was likewise the brightest of Raleigh's life; surging forwards with crowded sail, in the van of some of the bravest men ever sent forth to conflict by England. As the 'Warspite' swung into the bay, the forts and some of the galleons opened fire upon it; but Raleigh disdained to answer them otherwise than by a blare of trumpets. When, however, he had reached a position which he judged most convenient, he laid

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State Paper Office, a beautiful little chart made at the time, which all interested in the topography of that remarkable harbour may consult with advantage.

aside his reserve, and poured broadside after broadside into the galleys and galleons within range. Forming the principal object of the enemy's fire* for three hours, the 'Warspite' remained almost perpetually involved in smoke, while its great guns belched forth thunder, peal for peal with those of the foe, till Cadiz with all its waters was shaken as if by an earthquake.

It had been agreed in the night that the 'San Felipe,' the greatest galleon of Spain, which Raleigh had singled out for his victim, should, after having been crippled by the guns, be taken by boarding, and Effingham had promised his Rear-admiral to send him two fly-boats for the purpose. But the fly-boats not making their appearance, and the critical moment rapidly approaching in which Raleigh foresaw the mariners would desert and fire the 'San Felipe,' he sprang into his barge, and rowing to the 'Ark Royal,' demanded permission to board with the 'Warspite.' This request being granted, he hastened back, to find that during his fifteen minutes' absence Vere and Howard had shot ahead of the 'Warspite,' which, from being the first ship of the vanguard, had thus become the third.

To regain his post, Raleigh slipped anchor, and thrusting the 'Warspite' between the 'Lion' and the

* Yet Monson, who commanded under Essex in the 'Repulse,' seeks to disparage Raleigh and put forward himself. 'Naval Tracts,' iii., 29.

'Rainbow,' got before both, and then threw his ship right across the channel, so that no one could again outstrip him for that day.

The science of manœuvring, which has reached to so great perfection in our days, was then little understood—valour and fiery intrepidity supplied its place, and snatched victory from the slippery pinnacle of danger. This was the Balaklava charge of the ocean. From seventeen Spanish ships of war, drawn up in half moon before the city's ramparts, with here and there open intervals through which fort and curtain poured their round shot, showers of flaming metal descended upon the English ships, where all was enthusiasm and eager rivalry. Instead of remaining aloof, guiding by his intelligence the energies of his officers, Effingham deserted the 'Ark Royal,' which proved too bulky to pass the channel, and threw himself into the 'Nonpareil,' with the Lord Thomas Howard. "My Lord-general Essex," says Raleigh, "thinking his ship's sides stronger than the rest, thrust the 'Dreadnought' aside, and came next the 'Warspite' on the left hand, ahead all that rank, but my Lord Thomas. The marshal, while we had no leisure to look behind us, secretly fastened a rope on my ship's side towards him, to draw himself up equally with me; but some of my company advertising me thereof, I caused it to be cut off, and so he fell back into his place."

Raleigh, Essex, and Howard now prepared to board the 'San Felipe,' which being perceived by those on board, led to the catastrophe he had apprehended. Dreading above all things the fate of falling into the hands of the English, the crews of the 'San Felipe' and the 'San Tome' set their ships on fire, and endeavoured to escape to the shore. "The spectacle," says Raleigh, "was very lamentable on their side, for many drowned themselves, many half burnt leapt into the water, very many hanging by the ropes' ends by the ships' sides under the water even to the lips, many swimming with grievous wounds stricken under water and put out of their pain, and withal so huge a fire, and such tearing of the ordnance in the 'San Felipe' and the rest when the fire came to them, as if any man had a desire to see hell itself it was there most lively figured."

What followed was perfectly in keeping with this picture; the English, as is their wont, spared, and endeavoured to save, the vanquished; but the Flemings, though by no means distinguished during the battle,* now rushed forward to enjoy the delight of slaughter, by despatching all such of the enemy as were swimming for their lives, till they were beaten off by Raleigh and Effingham. The fragments of the Spanish fleet, seeing that all hope was lost, sought to provide for their own

* Monson indeed affirms that they had received orders not to fire, which is incredible. 'Naval Tracts,' iii., 29.

safety, some by running up the Guadalete, some by taking to the river of Puerta Real, while others making for the southern channel, ran their prows against the bridge, broke down its middle arches, and effected in that manner their escape into the ocean.

Writers often forget that to disparage the enemy is to take from your own merit, because if they in reality be cowardly and base, there can be little glory in overcoming them. At Cadiz, the Spaniards displayed, by sea at least, great courage and no inconsiderable skill, resisting their assailants during seven whole hours, and manœuvring their ships with as much science as their unwieldy bulk would permit.

When the fleet had been defeated and scattered, Essex, upon whom as General the chief command now devolved, prepared to land and assault the city.* The force actually disembarked consisted of three thousand soldiers and eight hundred mariners;† but a large portion of the former having been detached to perform a most impolitic service—that of breaking down the bridge del Suaco—which, though they knew it not, had been already destroyed by the galleys, there remained about

* On this occasion upwards of a hundred friars ranged themselves among the defenders of Cadiz, and according to the testimony of one of their own order, whose veracity I take to be indisputable, displayed far more courage than any of the others. 'Relacion,' &c., p. 174. M.S. Bib. Nac. Madrid.

† The Spanish 'Relacion' makes the number of the assailants amount to five thousand, p. 237.

two thousand three hundred men with whom to storm the city.

When those within the walls beheld the English descend from their ships, the authorities sent forth a considerable body of horse and foot to prevent their advance. A fight took place, in which the Spaniards were speedily worsted, though not without many slain on both sides; the routed Spaniards fled towards the city, across a sandy plain * some three miles in length, and on their approach found the gates shut in their faces, lest the enemy should enter with them. Cadiz was then proved to be wretchedly fortified, for the cavalry, dismounting, made their way with the infantry over an old wall into the suburbs.† The English pursuing the flying foe in part followed their example, Essex among the foremost, and Sir Francis Vere having broken open one of the gates, the whole of our force entered.

During four hours Cadiz presented the usual features of a sacked city: the soldiers breaking into houses, convents, monasteries, churches, and half frantic with wine, putting on the copes, chasubles, surplices, cassocks, cowls, and other vestments of the priests and friars, and dancing about in the streets in them, amid the shouts and laughter of their comrades.

From time to time some of them, especially the Flemings, shouted out, "Hang the Pope! Hang the

* Monson, iii., 30.

† 'Relacion,' *ut supra*.

Pope!"* which was thought to mean hang the clergy, and this belief spread terror through the whole city, especially when they beheld the havoc and devastation perpetrated in the churches, where pictures, crucifixes, images of saints, vases, candlesticks, and ornaments of all kinds were torn from the walls, or snatched from the altars, and dashed to pieces against the floor.

All the nuns, secular ladies, and friars took refuge in one vast church, where they remained during the sack and pillage throughout the following night, and nearly the whole of the next day, without meat or drink, a prey to agonizing terror, since it was impossible to foresee what was to be their fate. A friar who was present describes the scene in very forcible and plain language, dwelling particularly on the offensive odours produced by the crowding together of so great a multitude in one building, during the hottest season of the year, while it was impossible to preserve either decency or decorum.

Elsewhere spectacles still more horrible presented themselves; numbers, we are told, took refuge with their plate, money, and jewels, in the cathedral; but the soldiers, maddened with thirst of plunder, broke in after them, and put so many to the sword that a large portion of the wealth of Cadiz remained till we left the city buried beneath heaps of corpses.†

* 'Relacion de lo sucedido en Cadiz,' p. 352.

† Letter from an English spy employed by Essex in Spain. Birch, ii., 125.

Much surprise was excited among Elizabeth's subjects by the courtesy with which the nuns and other ladies were treated by the conquerors. Their wonder would have been less had they reflected that the principal English officers were either Catholics or under the influence of Catholics. This was the case with Effingham and Howard, and, if Essex had not been actually reconciled to the Romish church, he suffered himself then, as afterwards, on a far worse occasion, to be guided by the infamous person who, by portentous efforts of vice, if not by murder, had become his father-in-law; besides, there was a strong spirit of chivalry in the high-bred nobles of England, most of all in the Queen's former favourite, Raleigh, who had always piqued himself on being the very flower of courtesy. Under the ægis of this sentiment the nuns, ladies, children, friars, with their jewels and money, were marched down in a body to the sea, under the personal command of Effingham, who, standing on the beach, watched their embarkation in boats and launches; when they were ready to put off, he roared out his commands to the sailors, adding, with an oath, that he would hang at the yardarm any one who should lay a finger in violence on lady or nun.* They were then rowed over to Puentar Santa Maria, where they remained unmolested.

* The friar informs us that the nuns were embarked in a separate launch with the Dean who took charge of them. 'Relacion,' *ut supra*, p. 354.

Raleigh, we are told by Effingham, assisted actively in disembarking the troops; after which, having received during the action so severe a wound that he was unable to walk, the flesh of his leg being almost torn from the bone by a splinter, he could not join the assailants in the storm. Yet the love of plunder or of excitement being irresistible, he got some of his mariners to carry him on their shoulders into the melée. What he witnessed soon convinced him that he had taken a false step. Drunken soldiers and sailors, freed in an enemy's city from the restraints of discipline, were not likely to show much respect to a wounded officer, so that crowded, hustled, and pushed to and fro by plunder-seekers, he was soon glad to return to his ship. Essex, Effingham, Howard, Vere, with all the others who were sound in limb, actuated by the same feelings as the soldiers, flew about Cadiz, appropriating to themselves the largest and richest palaces, from which the inferior plunderers were effectually warned off.

While its commanders were thus engaged the English fleet lay almost deserted, and the chance of making booty of far greater value than all the city contained slipped from their hands. Forty carracks and other vessels, laden with merchandise worth more than twelve millions sterling, might, if proper precautions had been taken, have been then captured; two millions sterling were, on the evening of the sack, offered for their

ransom, but neither General nor Admiral being to be found, and Raleigh possessing no authority to treat without them, the golden opportunity was lost, for the Duke of Medina Sidonia set fire to the carracks, so that they were utterly consumed with all the riches they contained.

Irritated by disappointment as well as by his wound, Raleigh, without the least power to interfere, beheld the accomplishment of this destruction from the deck of the 'Warspite,' chafing more and more as one column of flame after another revealed to him the fate of the carracks, which, could they have been secured, would have rendered Elizabeth the richest sovereign in Europe. Meanwhile, in Cadiz, the principal inhabitants took refuge in the citadel till the following morning, when they hung out a white flag and offered to capitulate on reasonable terms.* The terms imposed upon them were not hard; being only such a ransom as they could easily pay. With the money thus obtained, and the plate, gold, jewels, silks, spices, works of art, and other costly merchandise found in the palaces of the nobles and the spacious mansions and warehouses of the opulent citizens, the officers of both fleet and army were so profusely enriched that no further service could be expected from them. It was different with Essex, whose appetite for treasure and glory having been violently

* MS. Relation of the winning of Cales. State Paper Office.

stimulated by the good fortune which had befallen him, and his mind being haunted, moreover, by foreknowledge of the angry reproaches he knew he should hear, as well from the nation as from Elizabeth, for neglecting to save the carracks from conflagration, he proposed that the fleet should repair to the Azores, in the hope of intercepting the plate fleet from the West Indies.

To discuss the merits of his proposition he called a council of war, in which his scheme was peremptorily set aside. Under ordinary circumstances the projected enterprise might have been feasible, but in the actual state of the fleet, gorged with wealth and demoralised by success, it was utterly impracticable. Some urged as arguments against it the deficiency of provisions, and those premonitory symptoms of disease which were discoverable in many ships; but the true objections lay in the obvious disinclination of officers and men to engage in any new undertaking till they should have enjoyed at home the fruits of their past victory. How to make the most of their gains occupied all minds. Elizabeth, they knew, would send down commissioners to all the principal ports of England to seize upon and store up for equitable distribution all the plunder* which should be brought away, and to elude this process both naval and military commanders chartered small barks,

* On the variety of the plunder obtained, see Report of Goods, &c., August 10th and 11th, 1596. State Paper Office.

which they directed to put in by night upon unfrequented parts of the coast, whence they might convey their booty to places of concealment.* With men in such a frame of mind it would have been madness to attempt any new enterprise, unless it were at once easy and productive of gain. On their way home, therefore, they voluntarily landed at different points on the coast of Portugal, where they augmented their stores without danger. At Fero, which they found deserted by its inhabitants, they took from the episcopal palace the library of the famous Bishop Osorius,† which was presented either by Essex or Raleigh to Sir Thomas Bodley, and formed the nucleus of the Bodleian.

* Birch, ii., 97.

† Monson, 'Naval Tracts,' iii., 32.

CHAPTER XVI.

RESTORATION TO FAVOUR.

SOME have imagined that in uniting with Effingham in opposing Essex's plan for extending the operations of the fleet to the Azores, Raleigh was actuated by unworthy motives. Such was the view taken at the time by Anthony Bacon, who, after quoting from the Vulgate a saying of Christ, observes that "Sir Walter Raleigh hath enough of these *woes* laid upon him for having persuaded my Lord-admiral from joining with my Lord of Essex, and persuaded an untimely, unlucky, and most dishonourable return."* The invectives against Raleigh were based obviously on the belief that he was a sort of dictator in the fleet, swaying the opinions of admirals and commanders at his pleasure, and that he was wholly reckless of incurring the rancorous hatred of Essex. Policy at least would have restrained him from such a course. He re-

* Letter to Dr. Hawkins, September 1st, 1596. Birch, ii., 122.

membered only too well that he was still in disgrace with Elizabeth, and that if he failed to subdue the hostility of the favourite, his exclusion from court might be perpetual. Sir Anthony Standen, one of Essex's popish adherents, pointed out sarcastically, on the eve of the expedition, the extreme deference shown by Raleigh to the Earl; the same policy regulated his conduct when he prevented a premature disembarkation. He obtained from the Earl, as well as from the Lord-admiral, probably in consequence of his courteous bearing, the much-coveted honour of leading the vanguard in the attack; if, therefore, his conscientious convictions led him to coincide with Effingham in dissuading farther operations, it is attributing too paltry a feeling to Essex to assume that he regarded Raleigh with a vindictive eye for expressing his opinion honestly; and that, in fact, he was above this meanness will presently appear. In the fleet, both among officers and men, no one was more popular than Raleigh. We have seen with what enthusiasm he was greeted by the mariners when, after emerging from the Tower, he trod the deck of the 'Madre de Dios' at Dartmouth; and this marked preference from those with whom he had fought and bled in part at least enabled him to dispense with the smiles of more powerful individuals on shore. Even the basest of Essex's creatures bore testimony, however reluctantly, to the equitable bearing

of Raleigh towards him. "These lords," says Standen, "have created sixty-four knights, and Sir Walter Raleigh observes my Lord-general out of all . . . . owns, I say, you can lay no honour upon him that he hath not deserved, for without him, I know what, and with him, I know what also."*

From this obscure jargon we may discover the fact that Essex was at the moment content with Raleigh, for the underling only wrote what he knew to be the opinion of his superior. Others gave their testimony to Raleigh's conduct from different motives. An officer in the fleet, who had probably fought by his side, writing from the scene of action, animadverts upon the partiality shown by Essex, Vere, and others to the soldiers, so that not even a house was awarded to any naval officer "under the degree of Sir Walter Raleigh," who, however, the writer says, "had not much, although he deserved very much in this, that he fought so bravely with the Spanish fleet while they were overthrown. If our sovereign mistress had seen it, it would, I think, have been held a sufficient expiation for all his faults whatsoever. I have always held him to be wise, and now I am *testigo de vista* that he is a very valiant seaman."†

* Letter to Anthony Bacon from Cadiz, July 5th, 1596. Birch ii., 49.

† Letter to Sir John Stanhope from Cadiz. Birch, ii., 96, 97.

At court, Essex, in spite of his popular manners, had left behind him numerous enemies, who strove to damage him in the opinion of Elizabeth, and in part succeeded. These, from the double motive of hatred to him and friendliness to Raleigh, indulged in eloquent eulogiums on the services of the fleet, which their hero shared with Effingham, Lord Thomas Howard, Southwell, the two Cliffords, and others. Essex's supporters could not mistake the tendency of these manœuvres. Anthony Bacon undertook to sound Essex's praises in Scotland, La Fontaine in France, and Bodley in the Low Countries, while Cecil, with the authority of his place and genius, counteracted their intrigues in France by sending to Henri Quatre a history of the Cadiz expedition, in which Essex, as his friends thought, had little justice done him. To set matters right, therefore, in that quarter, Reynolds, one of the Earl's private secretaries, fabricated a different account, which, through the contrivance of La Fontaine, who kept back Cecil's despatch, reached the French king before, or at least by the same courier, with the secretary's relation.

Through such a web of rivalry and intrigue it is difficult to discern the motives or movements of queen or ministers. Elizabeth, now paling before the shadows of the grave, began reluctantly to discover the coldness —almost approaching to aversion—with which she was

regarded by many who professed the utmost warmth of affection. Among these Essex was chief. It was natural that he should not love a lady who, for age, might have been his grandmother; but interest and ambition prompting him to affect love, he secretly despised himself for his own hypocrisy, and hated her as the cause of it. Part of this truth, though not the whole, already dawned upon Elizabeth, who became weak, and lost her freedom of action in the presence of her idol, but recovered self-command when he was removed. It will be remembered how seven years before she was maddened by his desertion; his absence had now come to be almost a relief, because it diminished the infatuation that degraded her.

Without the discernment, the abilities, or the mental grasp of Leicester, which had enabled him to sway Elizabeth's mind when it was strongest, Essex sought, but often failed, to sway that mind when it had been weakened by age. The cause of his failure was insolent vanity. He might nearly always have won Elizabeth to compliance by the use of persuasion, whereas, thinking to prevail by bravado and bluster, he met with checks and refusals, which wounded his self-love, and rendered him vindictive. Before his departure for Cadiz he made an effort to snatch the sceptre of prerogative from the Queen's hands, and to determine in her stead who should be Secretary of State; she resisted his

interference, but postponed, till he should be absent, taking any decisive step; she then, however, set aside his nominee, Sir Thomas Bodley, and gave the place to the man of her own choice, Sir Robert Cecil. Acquainted with all the circumstances of this affair, and stimulated by a thousand other motives, Cecil hated Essex, and the sentiment was only rendered the more deadly by the frequent necessity of concealing it. Beneath the mask of playfulness, and jovial unconcern, the little secretary studied the weak places in Essex's character, and professing sometimes friendship, sometimes indifference, always held himself in readiness to plunge his weapon on the first occasion that presented itself into his overbearing enemy's vitals.

The Cadiz expedition, though successful, had yet, throughout its continuance, been disfigured by so many blunders, that it offered numerous coigns of vantage to criticism. Essex knew this, as well as that the blame of nearly every misadventure would, if the truth were revealed, fasten upon himself; he therefore cooked up a partial relation in the hope of gathering the first-fruits of public opinion, and sent it by his secretary Cuffe, to England, that Reynolds, Bacon, or some other of his obsequious friends might put it forth to the world, and so transfer Raleigh's laurels to his own brow. For this purpose every variety of intrigue was put in play to get the false account published, so

as to prejudice the ear of the nation before the true account could appear. The judgment of the council was first attempted to be warped, then an assault was made on the integrity of its several members, more especially of the Archbishop of Canterbury; but Elizabeth, having issued her prohibition, under pain of death, to publish the relation written by Essex under the name of Cuffe, the plotters were checkmated. As justice and decency enjoined, the government resolved to wait till it should be in possession of a thorough knowledge of the affair before putting forward any statement to the public. Accurate information gradually came in from several quarters; Sir Anthony Ashley, despatched by the commanders to lay before Elizabeth and her council a true account of the expedition, performed his duty with honest frankness, awarding, as posterity still awards, the credit for highest valour and prudence to Sir Walter Raleigh. This, Essex's partizans stigmatized as treachery, because Ashley, for his deserts, had been knighted at Cadiz; others, however, had come in before him with the same version of the story, so that the whole court, council, and country became rapidly impregnated with admiration for Raleigh.

This, as might have been foreseen, produced its full effect upon Elizabeth, in whose breast the old feeling for her Captain of the Guard revived, though

in public she shrouded her partiality under the disguise of general terms. Her anger against Essex arose, perhaps, in part, from the reckless lavishness with which he had squandered among his friends and dependents the wealth which should have found its way into the public treasury; while the men most distinguished for valour, and naval and military skill, had to content themselves, like her, with a miserable pittance of the plunder. Essex's friends had, therefore, but cold comfort to meet him with on his return. His secretary, the day before his landing at Plymouth, wrote, saying: "Her Majesty was wholly possessed with discontented humours, which the Earl's backward friends nourished by all means possible, suggesting that she had been abused in the giving away of so rich a spoil, and extenuating the worthiness of the action to his Lordship's great disadvantage, and yet attributing the uttermost to the *sea-faction*,"* a term by which Raleigh, Effingham, his son-in-law Southwell, and Lord Thomas Howard were designated.

In spite of the elements of discord, and mutual aversion existing beneath the surface, revealed by the facts above enumerated, the appearance of good-will between Raleigh and Essex was still maintained. While the Earl posted to court, and the Lord-admiral moved forward with the fleet, Raleigh, the loadstone of whose

* Birch, ii., 96.

affections lay in Dorsetshire, put in at Weymouth on the 12th of August. How he journeyed to Sherbourne Castle to meet his beautiful wife and son is not known; but whatever may have been the joy of that meeting, he had the mortification to find as some counterbalance that his worldly prospects had in his absence been in some degree blighted.

During a long period Meeres, a solicitor, had been his land agent, or steward,* and having mismanaged his trust, an action had been brought against him by Raleigh, which was pending when the expedition sailed for Cadiz. His counsel, Sergeant Heale—who afterwards deserted his interests and became the bitterest of his assailants at Winchester—on this occasion moved to have the trial staid till his return: his application was denied, and judgment given in favour of Meeres. Immediately on learning this, Raleigh wrote a hasty and intemperate letter to his friend Henry Brooke, whom through courtesy he called "my lord." Brooke had not then, however, legally attained the title, for his father, who succeeded Hunsdon as Lord Chamberlain, did not die till the following March.† There is much that is enigmatical in Raleigh's letter. It speaks of castles, Spaniards, fortifications, and so on, but

* The instrument by which Meeres was constituted Raleigh's agent is dated August 28th, 1592. State Paper Office.

† His death took place at midnight, March 5th, 1597. 'Sidney Papers,' ii., 25.

without designating any place, and then presses Brooke to meet the writer at Bath, where it says he expects Percy, Earl of Northumberland. In the postscript Raleigh thus attacks his Dorsetshire enemies:—

"My Lord Viscount hath so exalted Meeres's suit against me in my absence, as neither Mr. Sergeant Heale, nor any else, could be heard for me to stay trial while I was out of the land in her Majesty's service, a right and courtesy afforded to every beggar. I never busied myself with the Viscount, neither of his extortion, nor the poisoning of his wife, as it is here avowed. I have forborne him in respect of my Lord Thomas, and chiefly because of Mr. Secretary, who, in his love, my Lord Thomas hath wished me to it; but I will not endure wrong at so peevish a fool's hands any longer, I will rather lose my life. I think that my Lord Puritan Periam doth think that the Queen shall have more use of rogues and villains than of me, or else he would not, at Byndon's instance, have yielded to try actions against me, being out of the land."*

Whether or not the visit to Bath took place does not appear; but in the course of the winter Raleigh repaired to London, where he lived in a style of great magnificence at Durham House, which stood facing

* Raleigh to Cobham, Weymouth, August 12th, 1596. State Paper Office.

the river, on the site of the present Adelphi. Burleigh and Essex had likewise houses in the Strand, and between them a constant though superficial intercourse was carried on. Hostility to Spain was still the feeling uppermost in the public mind, and Essex, to gratify the country and soothe Elizabeth for the loss of the treasure which had been squandered among the officers at Cadiz, projected a new enterprise, denominated at the time the "Island Voyage." While this scheme was dragging its slow length along, a hundred court intrigues were in simultaneous action, all aiming at place or pelf, and conducted in many cases with shameless effrontery. Viewed from without, office and power make a dazzling show, and create in vulgar minds the belief that all within is dignity and happiness; though, if the curtain were raised, the eye would turn away with scorn and disgust from the sycophancy, the crawling, the baseness, the slander, and falsehood by which eminence is too frequently attained.

Raleigh's chief object now, as it had been for years, was to appease Elizabeth, to accomplish which there were few things he would not have done. The principal bar to his success in this matter was the influence of Essex, which he had long vainly striven to neutralise. The task was one of Herculean difficulty. Every one knew that Secretary Cecil and Henry Brooke, now Lord Cobham, both in high favour with Elizabeth,

reckoned among Raleigh's friends, and Essex's enemies; how, therefore, could the vindictive and wayward favourite be brought to regard with complacency the individual whom such men favoured? There were, besides, perpetual conflicts going on for place and emolument; every man grasping at some office; while Essex aimed at commanding the whole fountain of preferment, that he might scatter honours and salaries without stint among his dependents. Before the elder Cobham died there was a legion of suitors for his places of Lord Chamberlain and Warden of the Cinque Ports, among whom were his son Henry, Raleigh's nephew, Robert Sidney, Sir Edward Wotton, the Lords Hunsdon, Buckhurst, Willoughby, and even Essex himself. In favour of one or other of these, multitudes of friends and relations, male and female, besieged Elizabeth with solicitations, but she had for once made up her mind, and to the chagrin and disappointment of many, bestowed the much-coveted place on Cecil's brother-in-law, the young Lord Cobham.

The office of Vice Chamberlain being vacant, Raleigh joined in the scramble for appointments, and became a solicitor for that post. Too many obstacles, however, stood between him and success. In spite of his splendid services at Cadiz, Elizabeth still refused to see him, though it was suspected that the show of resentment would not be kept up much longer; yet no truer saying

was ever uttered than that of Rowland White, who observes that, "to be a nobleman born, is more respected than to be virtuous and worthy."* This every one found who sought to rise at Elizabeth's court, where merit was invariably postponed to rank, save in the case of Cecil, whom she herself had elevated. Seeing no other course left, Raleigh resolved upon what was generally believed to be a hopeless enterprise—reconciling Essex with the Secretary; for till this should be done, he saw clearly the hopelessness of all advancement for himself, since what one recommended to the Queen, the other would certainly thwart. By what magic he wrought is not known, but in the early spring of 1597 the virulence of the feud between favourite and secretary began to abate, and the courtiers soon beheld with wonder the formation of a triumvirate, apparently welded in firm friendship: Raleigh, Essex, and Cecil dined, supped, and chatted continually together, and wise persons, astonished at the occurrence, began to inquire what new portent they should next witness.

It was soon noised abroad that another expedition was organizing against Spain, of which Essex was to be Admiral, Lord Thomas Howard Vice-admiral, and Raleigh Rear-admiral. With them, the Earl of Cumberland was sought to be joined in equal command; but from the conviction that birth ought always to take

* 'Sidney Papers,' ii., 26.

rank before intellect and virtue, he refused, even at the desire of the Queen, to take service in the enterprise. Whatever might be the prospect opening out before him, Essex could never for any length of time keep in check his evil passions. Regardless whether he gave umbrage to Elizabeth or not, he visited Lady Russell's daughter Anne, one of his old mistresses; then he feigned illness, and kept his chamber, though the wags of his establishment remarked that he ate and slept well. One day he meditated running away from the court to seclude himself at his seat in Wales, and went so far as to have his servants mounted, and his own horse brought forth before the gates of Essex House, upon which, to pacify her presumptuous minion, the Queen made him Master of the Ordnance, with which addition to his income he was content.*

Raleigh's affairs meanwhile progressed but slowly, because, though Essex's jealousy might be lulled for a moment, he could not fail, when reflection awakened in him, to apprehend evil consequences from the restoration of his old enemy to favour. In doubt and uncertainty the spring wore away, and summer was fast approaching, during which, if any great enterprise were to be attempted, the fleet must put to sea. Cecil, with views of his own which it may not be impossible to divine, made use of his brief intimacy with the Earl to

* 'Sidney Papers,' ii., 27.

strengthen one party and weaken another at court—for all probable eventualities he believed he could depend on Raleigh, and therefore so strenuously urged his claims, that Elizabeth, perhaps without much reluctance, consented to see him again. Essex, who could not be prevailed upon to witness the interview, rode away to Chatham. Full of the advantages to be derived from the step he was taking, Cecil, on the morning of the 1st of June, accompanied Raleigh to court, and conducted him into the presence of the Queen.

If there was pleasure, there must also have been much pain in this meeting. Fifteen years before he had stood highest of all men in her favour, had been spoken of universally and publicly as her "minion," had influenced her will, directed the dispensing of her graces, and been, in brief, during ten years, nearly all-powerful. Her capricious affections, and his own preference of a youthful beauty, had severed the link between them, and therefore, when they met on this 1st of June, 1597, it was not as oracle and hierophant, not as Queen and favourite, but as sovereign and great statesman and commander. At his approach, and the sound of his voice, Elizabeth's resentment melted away—he was restored to office as the Captain of her Guard,* rode out with her on that same evening, and was thenceforward

* Chamberlain to Carleton, June 20th, 1597. State Paper Office.

admitted as in former years to the most intimate intercourse.*

From the moment of Raleigh's restoration to his office, Essex's star, in spite of some fitful and uncertain flashes of splendour, began to pale. He seemed to be under the influence of something like fate, which, however, was only the combination of his own incapacity, with the bigotry, envy, and vindictiveness of his adherents. Both to him and to Raleigh the expedition now in progress was big with momentous consequences. The fatal spirit of rivalry could not be quenched either in one or the other; Essex despised Raleigh as a man of inferior birth and position; while Raleigh flung back his contempt, knowing him to be his inferior in everything else.

With such feelings in their breasts, there could obviously be no cordial intimacy, though Raleigh laboured to stand well with the Earl, partly to pleasure Elizabeth, partly out of respect for the interest of the service in which he was engaged. The fortunes of England were in fact at stake; for as Philip, with the pertinacity of dotage, still clung to his policy of invasion, and had organized formidable armaments by sea and land for its realization, it was impossible to overrate the importance of destroying or taking possession of the means by which alone he could accomplish his purpose.†

* 'Sidney Papers,' ii., 55.

† Birch, ii., 344.

Raleigh accordingly determined to pursue the course which had enabled him to pass through the ordeal of the Cadiz expedition without scath. Yet his enemies were now stronger and more exasperated,* for among the higher officers he had few or no friends. Still his courage never flinched; he trusted much also to that unfailing courtesy which had often blunted the point of rancour and converted foes into friends. He saw that Elizabeth's passion for Essex, which in 1589 had rendered her regardless of shame and modesty, was now rapidly on the wane, and therefore hoped that forbearance towards her favourite would not need to be of long duration.

Before quitting London, Essex, desirous of leaving a favourable impression on Cecil's mind, gave him an entertainment, to which of course their mutual friends were invited: it was customary on such occasions to introduce, among other recreations, the performance of a play; and the piece chosen by Essex at his farewell banquet was 'Richard II.' It is not at all certain, however, that it was Shakespeare's, because there existed an older play on the same subject, which may have answered the Earl's purpose just as well; yet as Shakespeare's tragedy was produced this year, and entered on the stationers' books twelve days after the departure of

* His reconciliation with Vere at Weymouth, he knew to be merely in appearance. Birch, ii., 352.

the fleet, it may possibly have been the piece in question. The object, in that case, must have been discernible to all thinking spectators. It will be remembered, that nearly nine years before, Essex had challenged Raleigh to single combat, when he had probably made use of threats and accusations which oozed out, and became part of public opinion on the subject of him and his rival. At first the council sought to assuage the fury of the young Earl, and preserve him from the avenging sword of Raleigh; but it is probable that before the furious antagonists consented to lay aside the design of engaging in mortal strife, Elizabeth herself was constrained to interfere. To these facts Shakespeare may have ventured to allude in his play, where Essex must be Bolingbroke, Raleigh Norfolk, and Elizabeth Richard II.

What was then done at Essex House, Elizabeth, though not present, beheld with vicarious eyes, and could not have failed to understand the menace. What happened four years later was in contemplation then, and it is not unfair to infer, that as the general purpose was shaping itself in the Earl's mind, so the subordinate incidents of the tragedy, bearing more or less directly upon Raleigh's fate, were also taking their place deliberately in his scheme. The shedding of an enemy's blood was held to be a light matter; Essex and his friends could by falsehood and perjury, which they

regarded as venial offences, rid themselves of the Norfolk of their drama; after which they believed it would be easier to deal with Richard. Raleigh, we may be sure, understood the drift of the Earl's policy, though he affected to regard it from a sportive point of view: writing to Cecil from the fleet, in which he was for months to be cooped up with his enemy, he says, "I acquainted the Lord-general with your letter to me, and your kind acceptance of your entertainment; he was also wonderful merry at the conceit of Richard II. I hope it shall never alter, and whereof I shall be most glad as the true way to all our good, quiet, and advancement, and most of all for her sake whose affairs shall thereby find better progression." Then, turning away from this Utopian dream, and glancing at terrible probabilities which both he and Cecil contemplated, he adds,—"Sir, I will ever be yours; it is all I can say, and I will perform it with my life and with my fortune."*

When losing sight for a moment of their own intrigues the admirals came to examine the great instrument with which they were expected to humble the enemy's pride, they made a discovery which they thus described to the council:—"We are at our wits' ends to find her Majesty's fleet weakly and wretchedly manned as it is. We did from Weymouth advertise your Lordships, my

* From Plymouth, July 6th, 1597. State Paper Office.

Lord Admiral, and Mr. Secretary, of the monstrous abuse in the press-masters that sent the men which brought us hither. We were furnished with men of all occupations, that neither knew any rope, many of them, nor were once at sea; and as many of our men tell us, all the good men, for twenty shillings apiece, let go. When we looked for a supply in the west, those of Dorsetshire appeared not a man; but either were underhand discharged by the press-masters, or made a jest of the press. Now at Plymouth Sir Charles Harris showeth a letter of your Lordships and my Lord-admiral to discharge them all. How this doth perplex and confound us your Lordship may judge."*

To deepen the effect of his banquet and drama in the mind of Cecil, the Earl forwarded with the joint letter a short note, in which he says, "Let this only renew the affection to yourself. '*Egos*' in your letter cannot warm his bill but in mine, and '*arregos*' would answer him in a full measure. Be constant, therefore, in loving your faithfully professed friend."

* From Plymouth, July 8th, 1597. State Paper Office.

CHAPTER XVII.

ISLAND VOYAGE.

On the evening of Sunday, July 10th,* the fleet set sail from Plymouth with a fair wind, which after two days changed to the south, and blew a hurricane. In a few hours the ships were separated, blown violently in various directions; and at length, after struggling vainly with the storm for several days, driven back, some into the ports of Cornwall, others to Plymouth. In letters to Cecil and the lords of the council, Raleigh gave a vivid description of this disaster, seasoning his language with an abundant allowance of hypocrisy and adulation. With Elizabeth, for whom these ingredients were introduced, this policy may have answered, unless Cecil, who understood its drift, thought proper to undeceive her. Essex first put into Falmouth, but coming round afterwards to Plymouth, he took up his quarters

* Sir William Brown to Sir Robert Sidney, July 24th, 1597. 'Sidney Papers,' ii., 517.

with Raleigh in the 'Warspite,'* while his flag-ship, the 'Merehonneur,' was sent to Chatham for repair. Writing to Cecil on the 26th of July, Raleigh says, "My Lord-general is my guest in the 'Warspite,' the Earl of Rutland, Sir Thomas Germyn, Alexander Ratcliffe, and Sir R. Mansfield. I should have taken it unkindly if my Lord had taken up any other lodging till the 'Lion' came; and now her Majesty may be sure his Lordship shall sleep somewhat the sounder, though he fare the worse by lying with me, for I am an excellent watchman by sea."

Knowing what sentiments lurked under these fine phrases, we cannot fail to regret the circumstances which forced Raleigh to use them. Cecil, to whom such Machiavellism was more natural, seems to have revelled in holding out glittering baits to his enemy; for in a letter identical in date with Raleigh's, he affects to reveal, as if inadvertently, the zeal for Essex's interest by which he is actuated. His sportive epistle formed the envelope to one from Elizabeth herself, written in that mystical jargon in which she so often delighted. "Eyes of youth have sharp sights, but commonly not so deep as those of elder age, which makes me marvel less at rash attempts and headstrong counsels, which give not leisure to judgment's warning, or heed advice; but make a laughter at the one, and despise with scorn

* Raleigh to Cecil, July 26th, 1597. State Paper Office.

the last. This have I not heard, but seen, and thereof can witness bear; yet I cannot be so leud of nature to suppose that the scope was not good, how so the race was run.

"Trust not to the grace of your crazed vessel, that to the ocean, may fortune be to humble. Foresee and prevent it now in time, afore too late. You vex me much with small regard of what I skeap or bid. Admit that by miracle it would do well, yet venture not such wonders, where such approachful mischief might betide you. There remains that you, after your perilous first attempt, do not aggravate that danger with another in a farther climate, which must cost of blows good store. Let characters serve your turn, and be contented when you are well, which hath not ever been your property. Of this no more, but for all my moods, I forget not my tenses, in which I see no leisure, for aught but petitions to fortify with best forwardness the wants of this army, and in the same includes your safe return, and grant you wisdom to distinguish between *veri-similie* and *potest fieri*. Forget not to salute with my great favour good Thomas and faithful Mountjoy. I am like the common fashion that forget to give thanks for what I received; but I was so loth to take, that I had well nigh forgot to thank, but receive them now with millions, and let the nearest keep the dearest."*

* July, 1596. MS. State Paper Office.

As it had now become evident to the commanders of the fleet that some change in the object of the expedition would be necessary, Essex and Raleigh, on the 1st of August, set out from Plymouth to consult the oracles at court.* Not enjoying the advantage of travelling by an express-train, they were somewhat long on their journey; since they had not arrived on the 6th, for on that day Cecil, who knew nothing of their movements, forwarded to the Earl the Queen's orders to draw up a proclamation, or, as it was then called, a challenge, to be translated into several languages, and dispersed over the Continent, stating the reasons which justified the expedition.

Through shortness of provisions and the lateness of the season, it was thought prudent to relinquish the design originally entertained of attacking Corunna and Ferrol, so that a large land-force would not be needed. Five thousand soldiers were accordingly dismissed,† the thousand veterans from the Low Countries being deemed sufficient for such enterprises as were contemplated on shore. With this modification of their plans, the admirals a second time sailed from Plymouth, and passing along the shores of France, and the green hills of Biscay, were before Corunna by sunset on the 24th.

The August of that year was prolific of tempests. A

* Birch, ii., 353. 'Sidney Papers,' ii., 59.

† Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth,' ii., 597.

violent south-wester setting in with the night, Raleigh snapped his main-yard, and as he fell back along the shore, Sir William Brooke in the 'Dreadnought,' and upwards of twenty other vessels followed his lights.* Essex in the 'Repulse' met with no less a disaster, for his ship sprang a leak, and for some hours could with difficulty be kept afloat. However, the damage being repaired, he held on his course, touching first at one point of rendezvous, then at another, in quest of the missing ships; but not meeting them, put out to sea, and bore towards Flores, which he reached on the 11th of September.

It has been already shown that the fleet was filled with Raleigh's enemies, who now finding that he had not arrived, congratulated themselves on the good chance of reopening the breach between him and Essex, and wounding his reputation at home. It would be puerile to pretend that the Lord-general needed much provocation to strike a blow at his rival; falling in readily with the suggestions of Meyrick, Shirley, and above all, of his bloody father-in-law, Blount, he hastily drew up a despatch, filled with accusations against Raleigh, and detaching a fly-boat from the fleet, sent it under the command of Robert Knollys to England.

Meanwhile Raleigh having repaired his main-yard,

* Relation by Essex and other Commissioners, in Purchas, ii., 1935. Birch, ii., 360.

was following at no great distance in the wake of Essex. Touching at the North Cape and the Rock of Lisbon, he there found numerous ships waiting for the General, all of which he ordered to follow him. On the 8th of September, he found himself among the islands of the Wild Hawk group, and pushing his course slowly amid sultry calms, lunar-rainbows, and moonlight prospects of strange beauty, made Flores on the 14th.* Finding that the main body of the fleet had forestalled him, he immediately repaired on board the 'Repulse,' where Essex, with no little shame, confessed to him the affair of the calumnious despatch, and with many expressions of regret, promised to forward another in which he would contradict his former statements. This being settled, a council of war was held in Essex's cabin, at which it was determined, that while awaiting the arrival of the treasure-ships, they should take possession of the main islands of the group; the capture of Fayal containing the best port in the islands, was assigned to Essex and Raleigh; that of Graciosa to Howard and Vere; San Miguel fell to the share of Mountjoy and Blount; while Pico, the island in which best wine was found, was given to the Flemings as the place most congenial to their tastes.

Matters being thus arranged, Essex, who had supplied himself with water and provisions, set sail, leaving

* Gorges, in Purchas, ii., 1949.

Raleigh and his squadron to furnish themselves with the supplies they needed. Having issued orders for the taking in of water with all convenient speed, Raleigh, with Sir William Brooke, Sir Arthur Gorges, and other officers, went on shore to enjoy the pleasure of a stroll int he country, and meeting Lord Grey, and Sir Gilly Meyrick, they walked out to a small town a mile or two inland, where they dined.* When, after their return, they were all snug in their berths, Captain Arthur Champernoun came to them about midnight, with orders from the General to suspend the process of watering, and repair to him immediately at Fayal, where they would find all they needed. Firing off several shots to give notice to Brooke and the other commanders, Raleigh obeyed at once, and sailed for Fayal. When he beheld the island rising out of the ocean, in clustering eminences, tufted with trees, or pinnacled with aspiring rocks, he little dreamed what mischances awaited him amid those secluded scenes. All was calm and peaceful as he warped into the harbour;† Essex had not arrived, neither, it was evident, did the inhabitants expect a visit from any enemy; but upon behold-

* Purchas, ii., 1951.

† A writer of the last century, describing the Azores, observes that the harbour of Fayal, the best in the group, will contain ninety sail in perfect safety. The island then exported about 10,000 pipes of wine annually, and lying in the way of homeward-bound ships, was much frequented. 'History of the Azores,' p. 288.

ing the 'Warspite,' the 'Dreadnought,' and their consorts, they understood their danger, and began to make preparations, some for flight, others for defence. Men, women, children, nuns, friars, hurried pell-mell out of the town, bearing with them whatever effects they could in carriages, in carts, and on horses. While the stream of fugitives made towards the mountains, the soldiers in considerable bodies took up their positions at the various landing-places, where they threw up earthworks, and planted artillery.

Had Essex according to agreement been there, the proper course would doubtless have been to commence the attack at once, while the defences were unfinished, and ere all articles of value should have been removed. But precautions had been too surely taken by the ill-fated commander to prevent all chance of success. This was indeed to be from beginning to end an enterprise upon which mismanagement, failure, and disgrace were to stamp their marks. Knowing the Lord-general's jealous and vindictive humour, of which he had had some foretaste at Flores, Raleigh forbore the prize which lay so temptingly before him, listening to the murmurs of his crews, and the ill-repressed reproaches of his officers, who with good reason marvelled at the slackness of so impetuous a commander. They pointed to the town, rising terrace after terrace from the very wash of the sea, to the summit of a lovely eminence,

where a strong fort with curtains, ramparts, and battlements, waved over by the flag of Spain, looked defiance at the strangers. They stood in need of provisions; they thirsted for sweet water, which they beheld falling in sparkling rivulets into the sea. Why should they not cool their lips with it? The contents of their casks on board had long been converted into a puddle, fetid and noisome, their provisions were loathsome—before them lay everything they needed in abundance—why would not he, who in England had long been known as the fiery Raleigh, place himself at their head and lead them, as he had been wont, to victory.

In consequence of these discontents, a council, after two days' delay, met on board the 'Warspite.' Raleigh, Brooke, Gorges, and Harvey argued in favour of an immediate assault, but Meyrick, Shirley, and Parker, adherents of Essex, at once servile and petulant, made strenuous oppositions. A farther delay of two days was therefore agreed upon, at the expiration of which, whether the General arrived or not, Fayal was to be captured.

Four days having been wasted in vain expectations, Raleigh threw himself into his barge, and beneath a heavy fire, pulled towards the landing-place. His patience was exhausted, his blood was up, he rejected the aid of the Flemish captains, who frankly offered it, and at the head of his English followers, made good

his landing, charged the batteries,* drove the Spaniards in utter rout before him, and making his way up the hill, followed by four hundred and fifty Englishmen, dashed into Fayal, and was master of it, almost with the rapidity of magic.

Most cities when entered belie the promise of their exterior; with Fayal it was otherwise, for our countrymen found it to be a pleasant place,—"full of fine gardens, orchards, and wells of delicate waters, with fair streets, and one very fair church; also a nunnery and a friary.† Raleigh immediately took orders for quartering his troops, and having thrown up barricades, and set guards at the principal entrances to the town to prevent surprise, the rest of the soldiers were permitted to disperse in search of plunder. Having refreshed themselves with the wine and provisions which fell into their hands, they, as the night came on, betook themselves to rest, leaving the high fort to be dealt with on the morrow. As the day however began to break over the ocean, Essex's whole fleet was beheld making before the wind towards Fayal, a moving city of canvas upon the waves. As soon as the 'Repulse' cast anchor, the bitterest of Raleigh's enemies, Sir Gilly Meyrick was on board, relating to Essex the proceedings of the last four days, in the most distorted and irritating language. All mean natures are crawling to the powerful. Highest

* 'History of the World,' vi., 104. † Purchas, ii., 1957.

in the Queen's favour, closely allied to her by blood, Essex, besides his office of Commander-in-chief, possessed every requisite for rallying the servile and malignant around him, to exasperate his worst passions, and unite with him in depressing or destroying those whom he thought proper to look upon as his enemies. When Raleigh, who had pulled from the beach in his barge, climbed the ladder, and stood upon the deck of the 'Repulse,' he walked towards the General's cabin, between rows of scowling and menacing faces, and Essex, after giving him a faint welcome, burst forth into reproaches and accusations.* The course to be pursued towards him had been already determined on; referring to the instructions to the fleet, Essex pointed out that article which made it death for an officer to land troops or attack any place without the General's presence or command. All they who were eager to take Raleigh's life crowded round, and began to congratulate themselves that the long-wished-for moment had at length arrived. With imperturbable coolness Raleigh replied to Essex, who had charged him with breach of order, that he knew not of any such breach, and as to the article on which his Lordship laid so much stress, he desired the General to give him leave to defend himself by those laws which he as well as others had devised, and his Lordship, with the council of war had authorized, and

* See Birch, ii., 360.

that then his Lordship should find that he had not committed any error at all. "For," said he, "there is an article that, no captain of any ship, nor captain of any company, if he be severed from the fleet, shall land anywhere without directions from the General, or some other principal commander, upon pain of death; but I take myself to be a principal commander under your Lordship, and therefore not subject to that article, nor under the power of the law-martial, because a successive commander of the whole fleet in Her Majesty's Letters Patent, your Lordship and my Lord Thomas Howard failing.*

After a full half-hour spent in these bickerings, Essex put on for the moment a show of satisfaction, and going ashore with Raleigh, remained a short time at his quarters; matters, however, were not to be suffered to end so. Several influential officers in the fleet, hating the Rear-admiral, were fully bent on enacting a tragedy at Fayal, which could not be brought to its denouement without keeping open the breach between the Admirals. When Raleigh therefore invited Essex to sup with him, saying he would claim no privilege on that account, but would answer for his conduct in the morning, Sir Christopher Blount, dreading everything that seemed to promise a pacification, replied that Essex would not sup at all that night; to which Raleigh answered, that

* Gorges in Purchas, ii., 1958.

"When he invited him, he might disable his own appetite, but if my Lord pleased to stay, he would be very glad of his presence."

With these words the meeting broke up.* Essex and his partizans to mature their scheme for the Rear-admiral's destruction, and he to resolve in his own mind the means of counteracting their machinations. The plan pressed upon the General was to bring Raleigh to trial by a Court-martial, and if they found him guilty, as they resolved they would, to put him forthwith to death; by which the Earl would be at once delivered from the chief impediment to his absolute sway at court, and from his most formidable rival on the ocean. The course of argument they followed has been consigned to oblivion; Blount, Shirley, Meyrick, Parker, were notoriously inimical to the Rear-admiral; Mountjoy, Rutland, and Southampton may be supposed to have waded through the same slough of guilt, but unless through his own testimony† we should scarcely have believed that the great soldier Sir Francis Vere could have descended to act so ignoble a part. He tells us, however, that he displayed on this occasion less spleen than the others against Raleigh, which is admitting

* Sir William Monson, in his 'Naval Tracts in Churchill,' iii., 173, gives a brief but honest account of this transaction, observing that if Essex had not feared how the matter might be taken, it would have gone hard with Raleigh.

† Vere, 'Commentaries,' p. 51.

that he countenanced, though with less vehemence, their sanguinary purpose. By those who sought to enhance his generosity, Essex is reported to have said, that if Raleigh had been his friend, he would have proceeded against him, as his adherents advised; but this only places his character in a worse light, for conceding to him the possession of common sense, we must assume him to have known Raleigh to have been in the right, and that he had therefore no ground for proceeding against him, whether friend or foe.

Meanwhile, perceiving the deadly drift of his enemies, and convinced that they would shrink from no act of injustice or treachery to compass his death, Raleigh formed a determination which in any other circumstances would have been pronounced desperate. This was to sever his squadron from the rest of the fleet, to throw himself on the fidelity and attachment of his mariners, to clear his decks for action, and dare Essex to employ the *ultima ratio* of violence. He had come to this resolution, when Lord Thomas Howard, conjecturing by the movements of his squadron what was in contemplation, came on board the 'Warspite.' As Vice-admiral he possessed great authority, and as a man of moderate counsels, still more. He could not regard without keen anxiety the consequences of an appeal to force, and therefore made use of every means in his power to prevent it. Knowing Raleigh to be in the

right, and believing that Essex who must share the same conviction would be glad to be delivered from the dilemma in which his own weakness and the wickedness of his partizans had placed him, he sought to prevail on Raleigh to trust himself once more on board the 'Repulse.' Believing that he would thus be placing himself in the hands of his inveterate foes, Raleigh felt reluctant to follow the advice of Howard, till he pledged his own honour and life for his safety, and volunteered, moreover, should anything notwithstanding be attempted against him, to draw off from Essex with his ships, and, if things came to the worst, to join Raleigh's squadron in battle.

With this understanding between himself and the Vice-admiral, Raleigh in his barge was once more rowed to the 'Repulse,' where, for the interest of England, and to avoid the dishonour of her flag, he consented to apologize for having performed his duty; upon which the wayward and presumptuous favourite reluctantly laid aside the weapons of falsehood and malice. We shall discover however as we proceed that this scene of humiliation on the part of Raleigh, and of puerile triumph on that of Essex, was not buried in the vaults of forgetfulness, but kept perpetually before the memory, the more galling, because it had to be concealed beneath the veil of amity. While Raleigh's fate was in the balance, that of all the land and sea captains

who had acted with him was so likewise; but upon the apparent reconciliation of the angry commanders, all those gentlemen were set at liberty.

Affairs having been thus settled, Essex who had postponed all care of public business to the gratification of his private resentment, began to remember that he had certain duties to perform, among which one was to storm the fort which commanded the town, and to make prisoners of its garrison. A force was accordingly sent on this service, which summoning the Spaniards to surrender, and obtaining no answer, imagined some stratagem to be intended, and hesitated to proceed. By degrees the fact became evident, that the enemy with bag and baggage had evacuated the place in the night, leaving behind them nothing but the bodies of two captive officers, one an Englishman, the other a Fleming, whose throats they had cut to grace their departure.

The remainder of this expedition was nothing but one series of errors and mischances, exhibitions of disobedience on the part of inferiors, and of strange wilfulness on that of the General. Sailing back to St. Michael's, instead of taking the chief town, Essex left Raleigh with the fleet lying before it, and proceeded with the troops to Villa Franca, a few miles off, where he continued feasting and rioting six whole days. Sir Arthur Gorges suggests that they ultimately spared the place in consideration of large bribes, which is not

at all improbable, especially as great care was taken to leave Raleigh at a distance, that he might not be a witness of their proceedings. Gorges, indeed, affects to exculpate the General from suspicion, observing that he cared not for wealth; but even if this view of him were correct, there were other passions besides avarice for the gratification of which Essex may have consented to spare Villa Franca.*

While lying off St. Michael's, Raleigh captured a valuable prize, and but for the interference of a Low Country captain, would have taken another far more valuable. This was a ship of sixteen hundred tons burden, laden chiefly with spices, which, supposing the fleet to be Spanish, sailed into the midst of it before her officers had discovered their mistake. She then however ran herself aground, and disembarking the men with all the merchandize that time would allow, set herself on fire, and when Raleigh came up in his barge, was one blaze of thunder and lightning, the ordnance discharging, and the flames mounting into the air, while the burning spices diffused their perfume for miles round.

The autumnal equinox now coming on, the sea became exceedingly rough, upon which it was resolved to abandon all farther attempts against the Spaniards and return homewards. On the way they were over-

* Purchas, ii., 1964.

taken by a violent storm, during which a number of birds—an owl, a tarsel, a falcon, and afterwards a dove —alighted on the shrouds of the 'Warspite,' and were supposed by the sailors to foretel the pleasant calm that followed. During this part of the voyage, Essex seems to have been as much misled by his seafaring guides as he had previously been by his political friends, for he was only prevented by Sir Arthur Gorges from being wrecked and lost on the sands of the Welsh coast. To give him warning of his danger, this gallant officer ordered a gun to be fired,* which the master gunner obeyed sorely against his will; for both he and old Broadbent, the sailing-master of the 'Warspite,' would have allowed them to perish in revenge for the losses they had suffered by them, and as a punishment of their presumptuous ignorance.

Contrary to expectation, the Spanish Armada, when Essex's fleet was far out in the Atlantic, had put forth from the harbours of Spain and Portugal, and made for England, where there was neither fleet nor army to resist it. The moment was one of imminent peril. Some of its officers went on shore in the Scilly Islands, its sails were beheld from the headlands of Cornwall, where fly-boats and caravels, the harbingers of its approach, put in at various points, and threw the whole country into confusion. But the elements again inter-

* Purchas, ii., 1968.

posed—a hurricane from the north-west catching the advancing enemy in the open sea, scattered their ships and hurled them back, rent and shattered, to their own coast, whence they never afterwards ventured to prosecute their enterprises against Elizabeth.

CHAPTER XVIII.

RALEIGH, A PEACEMAKER.

WHILE Essex, Lord Thomas Howard, Sir Francis Vere, Lord Mountjoy, and the other gallants of the fleet hastened to court, where they expected to reap in various ways a harvest of fame and pleasure, Raleigh remained at the head of the land and sea forces in the West, where he was Lord-lieutenant. What prompted the Earl's haste was the desire to forestall with his own story any relations which Raleigh might be disposed to give the Queen of the expedition to the Azores. But his speed, however great, had been outstript by fame; Elizabeth was already in possession of the whole truth; and therefore, when he appeared, gave him so cool a reception that, in extreme disgust, he retired from court, and shut himself up in his house at Wanstead.

No one could be more fully aware than himself that the expedition had been a failure; that his own conduct throughout its continuance had been impolitic

and disgraceful, and that instead therefore of meriting any reward, he ought to be removed from his high position, which should in fairness be given to Raleigh. Knowing, however, the Queen's weakness for him, he felt no fear that any such justice would be done to his rival. The arrow that now stuck and rankled in his vanity had been sped from another quarter; during his absence Elizabeth, regaining her freedom of action, had made Cecil Master of the Wards, and promoted Lord Charles Howard to the earldom of Nottingham, which gave him precedence of Essex at court. For this proceeding he held Lord Burleigh and his son* to be quite as responsible as the Queen; and it was expected by the hangers on about the court who worshipped grandeur and great people from a distance, that a new rupture must follow between the moody Earl and those whom his friend Henry Howard called "the Leviathan and his cub." The day for that rupture however had not yet arrived. Essex now directed all the fury of his anger against Nottingham, whose patent he insisted should be cancelled; otherwise he would extend no forgiveness to the fond old Queen, and would challenge the new-made Earl or any of his sons or kindred to meet him in the field.

* Rowland White, speaking of this affair, says, "the Queen lays the blame of the wrong done to Essex, upon Burleigh and Cecil, though they do, with infinite protestations, execrations, and vows, deny it." 'Sidney Papers,' ii., 77.

By the pranks of this presumptuous favourite, Elizabeth, whose mind was too evidently losing its masculine firmness, allowed herself to be thrown into a state truly deserving of commiseration. The question of cancelling Nottingham's patent was debated; other contrivances for pacifying Essex were taken into consideration; but kind offers and messages were spurned, and the malcontent had at least the satisfaction of perceiving that he could, whenever he thought proper, arrest the whole current of public business. In the hope of disguising her overweening partiality, Elizabeth ordered first one minister, then another, to address Essex, to expostulate with him, as if of themselves, to urge the necessity of his taking his place in parliament, and returning to court. Lord Hunsdon first took up this burden, and informed him that "Her Majesty much wondered and made many constructions of your absence, holding it with imputations of farther desert in your late service by the enemy than you have any ways deserved. I pleaded your want of health—the shooting in your temples upon cold or any long speech—and yet your readiness to attend her Majesty, if she should be pleased to command your service. She accounted your duty and place sufficient to command you, and that a prince was not to be contested withal by a subject. Then, hearing that you intended to go to Grafton, I told her Majesty that after you should find some amendment in

the state of your body, I suppose you would for a short time retire yourself to a private regard of your own estate, which it behoved you, as shaken, to settle; but she rather imagined you should look into the public state of the nation as a councillor, then to respect your private state when you might take a more quiet time hereafter to look into it. Many discourses passed, in which I found nothing but kindness and consort towards you, if you will but turn about and take it." *

From the time of this communication, Essex—surrounded by his evil counsellors—the Blounts, the Cuffes, the Meyricks, the Danvers, the Lees, who foresaw not towards what they were precipitating both their victim and themselves—understood his present advantage, and felt that he had only to persevere a little longer in order to extort from the humiliated Queen whatever he might think proper to demand. Hunsdon's missive not producing the desired effect, Burleigh, now verging upon fourscore years and ten, was commissioned to woo back the sullen favourite whom in his heart he scorned.

"I know not how," he says, "to write to your Lordship for my satisfaction and your contentation. Sorry I am for your abstinence from here, whereby her Majesty hath want of her services, and yourself subject to diver-

* November, but without day of month, 1597. State Paper Office.

sity of censures. I find her Majesty incline to such as advise to that which was meet for her to do and for you to receive.

"Good my Lord, even come here with yielding, without disparagement of your honour, and plead your own cause with your presence, whereto I will be as serviceable as any friend you have, to my power, which is not to *run* for good feet, nor to fight for lack of sound hands, but able and ready with my heart to command my tongue to do you due honour.

"W. BURLEIGH.*

"I wish to receive news when you come to the court."

It was probably at this stage of the proceedings that Raleigh's inveterate enemy, Sir Francis Vere, came in the character of peacemaker to court. Elizabeth felt much respect for this brave old soldier, whose welcome on this occasion was not the less warm because he appeared as Essex's friend. The interview with the stately old lady took place in the gardens of Whitehall, where, like an irritated lioness, she was pacing to and fro, probably turning over in her mind various methods for bringing her favourite again to her feet. Approaching the Queen obsequiously, Vere entered into a defence

* The minister was now in his eighty-eighth year, having been born September 13th, 1510. MS. State Paper Office, 1597.

of Essex's conduct at the Azores, laying the blame of failure, he says, on those who deserved it, among whom he looked upon Raleigh as the chief. By this unlucky assertion he overthrew the whole scheme of his intervention, for Elizabeth's reliance on the wisdom of her former oracle had revived, so that she thought meanly of all who fell short of that estimate of his abilities which she had determined in her own mind to be the right one.

While Essex and his sanguinary buffoons were feasting and fiddling at Wanstead, and laughing at the perturbation into which they had thrown the Queen and her ministers, Raleigh himself appeared once more upon the stage. What Hunsdon and Burleigh had attempted in vain Elizabeth believed he could accomplish, and he was accordingly commissioned to restore harmony to the court. Ordinary logic, however keen and subtle, would have been lost upon Essex, on the altar of whose vanity no incense was pleasing save that which ascended from the humiliation of others. The laurels of Nottingham would suffer him to taste no repose—he must therefore be pushed from his rank, or the favourite be placed before him, otherwise the Queen should be for ever denied the happiness of patting him on the cheek, and basking in his smiles. Raleigh saw at once how this great achievement was to be accomplished. The office of Lord-marshal had been in

abeyance since the death of George Earl of Shrewsbury in 1590—revive it and bestow it on Essex, which would restore to him what he coveted—the immense gratification of strutting in court-pageants before the conqueror of the Armada.

Raleigh now experienced the truth of the old Latin proverb, *Incidit in Scyllam qui vult evitare Charybdim;* for what was sweet to Essex proved gall and wormwood to Nottingham.* Though victorious over Medina Sidonia in the narrow seas, he felt that he had now been defeated on a much more perilous battle-field —for the court of Elizabeth was nothing else, though, instead of calivers and great guns, the arms employed were intrigue, slander, calumny, and falsehood. What was to be done? He must consider, and to command leisure for consideration he must be ill. He was immediately seized, therefore, by fever, or the colic, and retired, melancholy and crestfallen, to his house at Chelsea. This was the usual stratagem to which malcontent courtiers had recourse, and Elizabeth, who perfectly understood their maladies, employed various medicines for their cure, sometimes sending them possets, sometimes promises of preferment. Nottingham

* Sir Henry Neville, writing privately to Cecil, relates a conversation he had held with Henri IV., who had learned from his ambassador the particulars of the discords between the Lord-admiral and Essex. Winwood, i., 27.

was old, but not at all the wiser on that account. No stripling fresh from the lawns of Penshurst, or the morasses of Lincolnshire, could have outdone the giddy frivolity with which this great seaman threw away his white wand of office as Lord-steward of the Household to chafe and fret in the suburbs at Raleigh's interference. It seems more than probable that he never at heart forgave this device of the Lord-marshalship; for though long afterwards when, upon the overthrow of Essex, Raleigh stood once more in the full blaze of Elizabeth's favour, the crafty Lord-admiral was seen to stoop, and, with the skirts of his gorgeous cloak, wipe the dust from Raleigh's shoes, he only waited for the opportunity which soon presented itself to discharge the pent-up venom of his heart.

In wretched squabbles such as the above terminated the thirty-ninth year of Elizabeth's reign. In the course of their lives, all men have much to forget and forgive; and in proportion to the nobility of their souls is the completeness of their forgiveness. Raleigh was the least vindictive man of his age; he could be fiercely angry, and when duty appeared to require it, could likewise be unrelenting and remorseless; but in mere matters of feeling or personal irritation, he may be said to have been always ready to throw the veil of oblivion over the wrongs he had suffered. Still, in regard to Essex, what now appeared to be friendship was

mere sham. Both he and Cecil were fully cognizant of the Earl's dealings with Scotland, and knew what they boded to them; they were likewise perfectly aware that Wanstead was chokeful of perjured villains and assassins, the use to be made of whom it was not as yet possible to discern, though the employment which such men coveted could not be innocent. Still it was deemed advisable by all the parties concerned to preserve a short lull in their animosities that they might be the better prepared to profit by the recurrence of favourable contingencies.

To persons outside this pause in the breathless chase of ambition appeared to be friendship, and keen was the envy with which what was thought to be the good fortune of Raleigh and Cecil inspired their competitors. "It is exceedingly wondered at by the world," says White, "to see the too great familiarity that is grown between the Earl of Essex, Sir Robert Cecil, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Lord Cobham: none but they enjoy him; they carry him away as they list." *

What the ultimate designs of the confederates aimed at will appear hereafter. Cecil was meditating a short absence, having been appointed, in conjunction with Herbert and Wilkes, to proceed on an embassy to France for the purpose of dissuading Henri Quatre from concluding a peace with Spain. Raleigh, who

* 'Sidney State Papers,' ii., 79.

saw honours, titles, and places showered profusely on his competitors, likewise endeavoured to make a move in advance: the Vice-chamberlainship was vacant, and seeing no chance of anything better, he sought to secure that post to himself. Finding, however, that the husband of his niece Barbara was also making interest for the same appointment, he desisted from the attempt.*

His ambition next took a higher flight; and observing Cecil to be filled on the eve of his departure with a prudent fervour of generosity, that he might multiply defenders during his absence, he caused it to be understood that a seat in the Upper House would not be displeasing to him.

In the interval between Cecil's appointment and his departure, a thousand pressing affairs crowded upon him. Essex, up to the ears in debt, was clamorous to have some means devised for paying them: Raleigh, it is said, offered him a third part of the proceeds of his prizes if he would use his favour with the Queen to obtain for him the honours he had deserved by his long services; but as the Earl either would not or could not fall in with the scheme, Cecil had to worry Elizabeth out of a sum nearly equal to forty thousand pounds of our money, to deliver his prodigal rival from his creditors. He well knew, however, that no amount

* Rowland White, January 14th, 1598.

of money would long keep Essex out of difficulties. The tan of his complexion* by the sun of Spain, which in 1596 had ruined him in the estimation of the aristocratic courtezans who thronged the palace, had now probably disappeared before the influence of an English winter, for his mistresses multiplied rapidly: he persevered in his visits to the house of Lady Russell; he flirted with Lady Mary Howard and Mrs. Southwell; he renewed his intimacy with the fair Brydges,† and through these circumstances, the secretary always possessed the means of bringing about a new rupture between the favourite and the Queen.

Meantime the hours passed merrily by; from New Year's Day to the beginning of February, all externally was frolic and joyousness with men several of whom used pleasure only as the bait of ambition. Dinners, music, the drama, the glow of poetry, and the fascinations of women were enlisted in the service of political intrigue, but wholly failed to throw the crafty secretary for one moment off his guard.

An able statesman of the ancient world observes that women are then in their happiest and most natural condition when little is said of them by men, either for good or ill. Through prudence or the benignity of fortune, Lady Raleigh appears to have squared her conduct upon this theory; yet we catch some glimpses of her

* Birch, i., 141. † Bohun, p. 340.

magnificent figure amid the feasting, the music, the dramas, which at Durham House, at Lord Compton's, at Lord Southampton's, at Lord Cobham's, preceded Cecil's departure for the Continent. Her female companions were such as chance, not choice, must have thrown around her—the Countess of Derby, Lady Walsingham, Mrs. Anne Russell, and others.

Mindful of how his father and he had stolen a march upon Essex in 1596 and the following year, Cecil now feared lest the tables should be turned upon him. His reluctance to set out, therefore, became so powerful that it penetrated through all disguises, and to quiet his apprehensions, Essex, out of gratitude for the large sums of money Cecil had procured for him, entered into a positive engagement to promote no persons during his absence with whom he might afterwards find it disagreeable to act.

Cecil set out on his diplomatic mission, the object of which was completely defeated by the conclusion of a treaty between France and Spain, known in history as the Peace of Vervins. Towards the close of winter no inconsiderable alarm was occasioned by the intelligence that a Spanish fleet had been discovered at sea, making towards the English Channel. The whole extent of coast, from the Thames to the Land's End, was ordered to be put in readiness to resist invasion, Essex being appointed to command in Kent, Raleigh in Cornwall,

with instructions to muster the strength of the counties; but the news arriving shortly after that the enemy's fleet had put into Calais, the panic subsided.

Events were now in progress, which, without Raleigh's agency, hastened the ruin of his most inveterate enemies, though by way of counterbalance they imparted fresh strength to others. Two great questions pressed upon the attention of the Government: peace with Spain, and the choice of a new Lord-deputy for Ireland. During the discussions in Council on the former, the opposition of Burleigh and Essex led to angry words, for the old statesman, accusing the favourite of delighting in nothing but slaughter, handed him the Prayer Book, pointing with his finger to these words: "Men of blood shall not live out half their days." *

From this subject a transition was made to that of selecting a Lord-deputy for Ireland. Public opinion included Raleigh among those who were deemed to be qualified to assume the office; but Essex, who knew his repugnance to be insurmountable, favoured the appointment of Sir George Carew, not through friendship, but in order to remove him out of the way. Elizabeth preferred the claims of Essex's own uncle, Sir William Knollys, and treated his arguments with disdain. The incentives to men's actions are often obscure even to themselves; at the Queen's elbow were two of

* Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth,' ii., 608.

the Earl's most inveterate enemies, the Earl of Nottingham and Sir Robert Cecil, before whom, in a paroxysm of presumption, he turned contemptuously upon his heel and stood with his back towards the Queen. Scarcely any act could have exceeded such an insult in grossness. Elizabeth sprang from her seat, and indignation stifling all sense of decorum, gave the pampered minion a sound box on the ear. In the blindness of rage, Essex put his hand on his sword, which he would have drawn on the Queen had not the Lord-admiral stepped between them. The remark in which he then indulged was as unbecoming as his conduct; swearing a great oath, he said he neither could nor would put up with such an affront, which he would not have borne from Henry VIII. himself. The Queen no less disdainfully bade him "Go and be hanged;" * upon which he left the presence, retired indignantly from court, and shut himself up as usual at Wanstead.

From this moment Essex's fate was sealed. To deepen the wound which his insolence and ingratitude had made in Elizabeth's breast, he is reported to have said in his anger that "Her disposition was as crooked as her carcase.† Women forgive injuries, but neither forgive nor forget insults. Elizabeth's conduct through-

* Camden, *ubi supra*.

† Clarendon, 'Parallel between Essex and Buckingham, Reliquæ Wottonianæ,' p. 192.

out had been such as to reveal but too clearly the nature of the relations which up to that time had subsisted between them; but with some involuntary gushes of fondness and secret touches of remorse, she thenceforward began to invoke the intervention of Nemesis. If not before, she now resolved to take order that none but approved artists*—that is, that none but such as understood their responsibility—should take her portrait, and that any which might have been made by others should be destroyed. Mirrors—which know no flattery—were carefully kept out of her way;† and the young beauties surrounding her, who could not if they would conceal their bloom and loveliness, called forth more than ever the asperity of her censure, and awakened in her more poignant jealousy.

About this time a miscreant, recently arrived from Scotland, having been arrested, imprisoned, tried and condemned for various heinous offences, suddenly made a confession which excited general consternation: he said he had been tampered with by James of Scotland, who, with many lures and promises, urged him to perpetrate a fearful crime. Over this transaction, obscurity and doubt were suffered to gather, some pretending that the accusation was merely a stratagem invented by the wretch to save or prolong his own

* Raleigh, 'History of the World,' Preface, ii., 19.

† Bohun, 'Character of Elizabeth,' pp. 302, 303.

existence, while others gave full credit to his statement, especially those who were cognisant of Essex's secret correspondence with the Scottish king, as well as with the character and unscrupulous policy of that personage. How much or how little Elizabeth herself believed must remain matter of conjecture, though there appears to be good grounds for thinking that she was not altogether incredulous. The crime meditated, however, was her murder; and the chief reason she assigned for her affected scepticism was unwillingness to be convinced that any sovereign prince could be guilty of such wickedness. After the experience of forty years, during which her life had been frequently attempted at the instigation of sovereign princes, both male and female, this declaration assumed very much the appearance of satire.* James interpreted it in that sense, and by a letter thoroughly in harmony with the character of the writer, laboured to remove the suspicions which he could not but perceive she entertained. In this strange production, he addresses the Queen of England as

* See Act to seclude from the throne all who had conspired against Elizabeth's life, Winwood, i., 3. In the same volume there is an account of one Ogleby, a Scotchman, who went from Rome to Madrid professing to be intrusted with a secret mission by James, who desired to confederate with Spain for the purpose of avenging his mother's death, and was ready to become a Catholic to insure the aid he sought, p. 2. Ogleby's business was believed at the time to deserve serious attention, *id.* p. 52; Cf. 'Secret Correspondence of James with Cecil,' p. 5.

"Madam and dearest sister," but the language he employs is unsatisfactory:—

"That I have been so long answering your last letter I most heartily pray you not to impute it to any fault of courtesy in me, whereunto I thank God my nature is in no ways inclined; but in truth I bear so little regard to so vile and treacherous lies, proceeding from so base a fountain, as I, through my own innocence should have force enough to bear me through the foggy mist of such groundless calumnies, and therefore had remitted the answer to your letter to have been carried by a messenger of my own, whom I am shortly to send unto you. My only suit is, that while you hear further from me, which shall be with all diligence, you would favour me so far as to delay the fellow's execution, if he be yet alive, to the effect that by some honourable means, wherein I am to deal with you, my undeserved slander may be removed from the minds of all men, which assuring myself of your princely honour and love towards me, you will gladly do. I commit you, Madam, and dearest sister, to the tuition of the Almighty. From my palace of Falkland, the 30th July, 1598.

"Your most loving and affectionate

"Brother and Cousin,

"JAMES R."

While Essex was involving himself in the meshes of that net which drew him ultimately to the block, Raleigh was leading a life irksome from its peacefulness; sometimes he received a number of distinguished guests at his castle in Dorsetshire, sometimes at Durham House, while his duties or interests occasionally made him an inmate of the Palace. Though naturally haughty beyond most men, he threw off among seamen and soldiers the stately guise of a courtier, and like Bluff Hal, affected the familiarity in which they delight. Returning to the Palace late one night, and knocking impatiently at the guard-room door, he was answered by a soldier from within. "Who is there?" inquired Raleigh. "One of Her Majesty's knaves," replied the soldier. "Open the door then, knave," said the captain. Hurt at being taken at his word, the soldier, when Raleigh entered, observed, "Nay, no knave, but one of her Majesty's honest servants."—"Right, friend," quoth Raleigh, "it was he was the knave who first said so."

Elizabeth habitually went to bed and rose early; but her courtiers, especially the sleepless Raleigh, kept bad hours, drinking, smoking, or gambling, according to the bent of their inclinations.

One night in the Presence-chamber, Raleigh, Southampton, and Parker playing at Primero, laughed and talked loud, upon which Ambrose Willoughby, Squire for the Body, requested them to desist lest they should

disturb the Queen. His gentle appeal producing no effect, he desired them angrily to be gone, or he would call in the guard to pull down the table, upon which Raleigh put up his money and departed; but the intemperate Southampton took offence, and, before he left, told Willoughby he would make him remember that evening. The handsome hero of Shakespeare's Sonnets possessed more beauty than dignity; meeting afterwards the Squire for the Body between the Tennis Court wall and the garden, Southampton struck him, and in the unseemly scuffle that ensued Willoughby pulled off a portion of Southampton's beard. Instead of laughing at the ludicrous rencontre, Elizabeth, when she heard of it, grew angry, and said, the Squire should have put the contumacious earl in confinement, and added, glancing at Essex, "she should like to see who would have dared to fetch him out."

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